TRUE WEST

NON-FICTION

August, 1966

35¢

SPECIAL TREASURE ISSUE

CONTEST RESULTS!
SEE PAGE 3

OREGON'S BURIED TREASURE • THE TRAGIC WARDS

THE BOOM DAYS OF STAGING • BUCK JONES — BONA FIDE HERO

WALT COBURN'S TALLY BOOK • SO YOU THINK YOU KNOW THE WEST?

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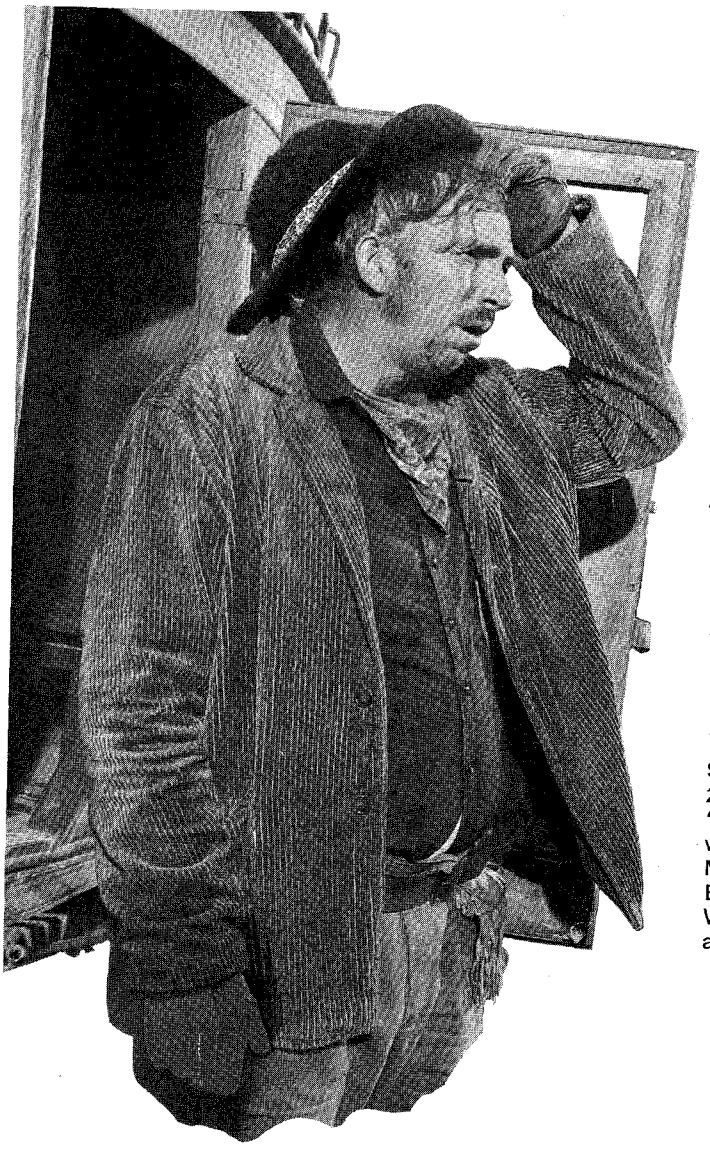

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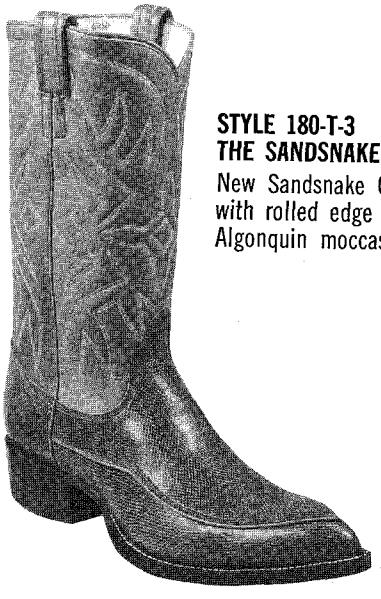

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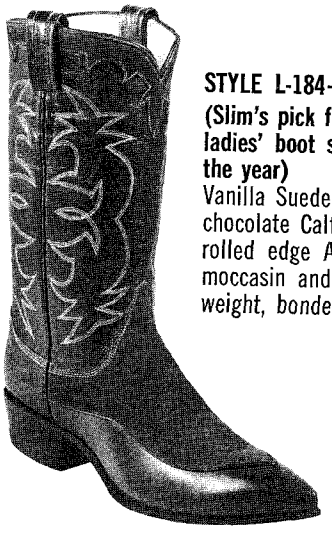

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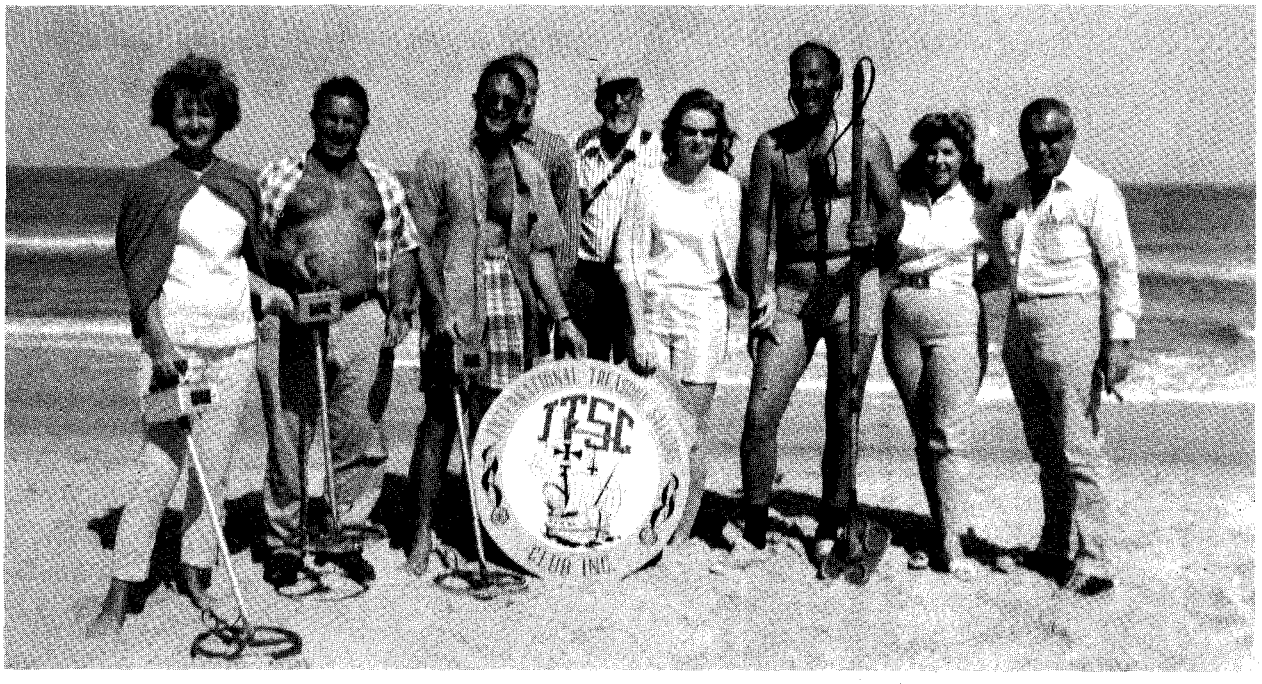
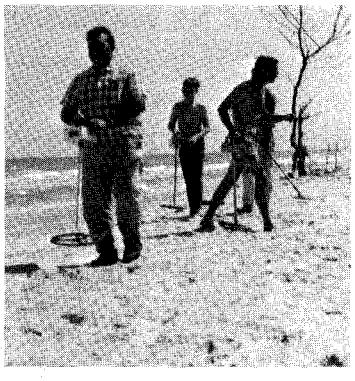


"TREASURE SALVORS, INC." group on the treasure site. Left to right—Shirley Jean Holzworth, Walt Holzworth, Rupert Gates, electronics genius Fay Fields who developed the underwater detector to tell the difference between ferrous and non-ferrous materials, Bill Mahan—associate, Delores Fisher, Mel Fisher, president and spark plug for Treasure Salvors, Inc. with the underwater detector, Nita Williams and Dick Williams.



Left to Right: 1. Members of "TREASURE SALVORS, INC." comb the beaches with their D-TEX detectors searching for coins. 2. Walt Holzworth with Pieces of Eight and his D-TEX at treasure site. 3. Walt and Rupe carefully check coin area near Ft. Pierce. Hundreds of these valuable coins have been found in a two-mile-long beach area near the wreck site.

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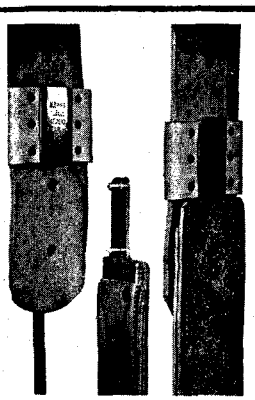

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July-August, 1966

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Whole No. 76

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Cover: Gene Shortridge

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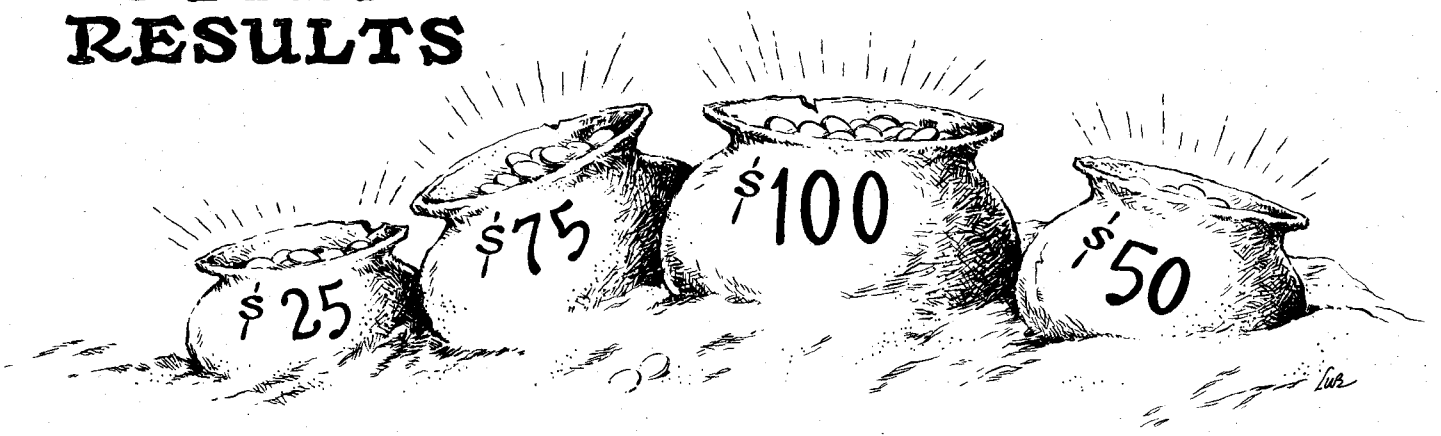
CONTEST RESULTS



FOURTH
Jack Leslie

SECOND
Gerald J. McIntosh

FIRST
John M. Hampton

THIRD
Martin Dwyer

BY GOLLY, we had ourselves a contest all right! Talk about letters! We thought all along that we were getting a big mail, have hired extra help to take care of it, and still some of us are weeks behind in answering your letters—but when this contest hit, it was like a forty-foot wall of water coming down a barely-running spring creek! Sonovagun! We thought about piling all of those letters in the corral and taking a picture of them so you could be impressed like we are, but the picture would have been so big that it wouldn't have gone on a double-page spread. (For those not acquainted with the *rank* type of western corn, the above is an excellent example!)

The red-eyed judges have selected the winners and have gone to bed for a ten-day nap. This is our Annual Treasure Issue and it's sort of appropriate that here are fourteen people who hit a little vein of pay dirt!

FIRST PRIZE—$100—**John M. Hampton,** 3737 29th Street, Port Arthur, Texas.

SECOND PRIZE—$75—**Gerald J. McIntosh,** 920 South Jefferson Street, Little Rock, Arkansas.

THIRD PRIZE—$50—**Martin Dwyer,** 415 Streamwood, Streamwood, Illinois.

FOURTH PRIZE—$25—**Jack Leslie,** 3101 South Pennsylvania, Englewood, Colorado.

TEN DOLLAR PRIZES go to: **A. R. Leichner,** 3736 N. E. 18th Avenue, Portland, Oregon; **Bob Forman,** 7615 Sandpoint Way N. E., Apt. 4-A, Seattle, Washington; **James W. Hall,** 1302 Ridgefield Circle, Chattanooga, Tennessee; **E. F. Scholey,** 323 Park Avenue, Prescott, Arizona; **Mrs. Selma Robbins,** 31 Meadowlark Drive, Kalispell, Montana; **Mrs. Gene Maas,** 113 Hillside, Topeka, Kansas; **Clair Houseman,** 410 South Lincoln Street, Crocker Apt. #20, Aberdeen, South Dakota; **Joe L. Threadgill,** 1753 Griegos Road, N. W., Albuquerque, New Mexico; **Earl Thorndike,** Aldarra Farms, Fall City, Washington; **Charles Beam,** 6851 Acacia Avenue, Garden Grove, California.

If I had any sense I would cut the thing off here and everybody would be happy. But I have never claimed to be bright so I will just keep on writing about this contest! Actually, it was a terrific surprise to us—we didn't know we had *that* many readers! Still on the treasure angle, we've been searching one way or another for the stuff all our lives and have never come up with a big find, but we sure uncovered a gold mine of ideas from our readers on this contest.

Dadburnit! I wish we could answer *every letter* but we would have to discontinue publishing for about a year in order to do it! There are hundreds of two, three, four, five- and even six-page letters—many with ten to fifteen suggestions, art work and all the trimmings. These letters *should be answered,* and you should each be thanked very warmly but it is a physical impossibility, so I am answering every durned one of you here by saying that we read *every one* of your letters and the warmth, faith and helpful spirit in them is enough to make us want to buy all of you a steak that it would sweat a mouse to run around!

A NUMBER of entries said to put my picture on the cover. Folks, have you ever seen a closeup of old Hosstail? Man, it might be a good idea at that—we would flat sell out every issue, people buying the magazine for scarecrows!

I think I got the greatest kick out of all those entries with drawings of a horse's back-end and tail with "A Hosstail Publication" across it in big letters! One thing for sure—it would "identify" us all right! However, about ten to one wanted "A Joe Small Publication" with various symbols, a number suggesting our little buffalo. We are going to use the one with the earliest postmark on the contents page of all three magazines. There were many covered wagon entries and we picked the one for first prize which was the most complete and had the earliest postmark—as we did all others.

The following is *very important* for those of you who did not win a prize. There have just *got* to be rules in a contest or the judges would wind up in the booby house and would be shot by angry losers when they got out! That is why it is so important that every contest is based on the idea, "in case of a tie, the one with the earliest postmark wins." We had OVER FIVE HUNDRED entries on one particular idea and the art work on no two of them was *exactly* identical! This is amazing! Therefore, with the exactness of entries and the postmark thing, you may be sure that nobody got cheated out of winning a prize.

Another thing I had better mention—there were many clever ideas submitted which would have been impractical on the cover because of mechanical difficulties. Many of you advised us to keep the symbol at the same place in every issue of all three magazines. This would be *perfect*—except that our covers are always different. Sometimes we would be running the symbol over somebody's head, or in a spot where it wouldn't show up—or take twenty-five or thirty other difficulties! Therefore, we'll just have to do the best we can and when we can't get the covered wagon up high for any particular reason, we'll just have to hope that people actually pull the magazine out and it will show up anywhere then.

Many of you also suggested that we run exactly the same kind of cover every issue—and there's no doubt about it, that would sure simplify things. However, we've always been as interested in seeing that the art of the Old West didn't die out as we have that the Old West stories didn't die out. Russell, Remington and other all-time greats have it made, but the present generation is producing great artists, too, and we know you like to keep up with what they're turning out. Not everybody can live close to a Western Art gallery, but we'll guarantee that if you read our three turrible rags, you'll see in a year's time a dozen or more reproductions of oils by the "Old Masters of Tomorrow."

Again, those of you who think, "I *know* my idea was better than that!"—remember that there are a hundred angles along with mechanical reasons and many other things that make up this complicated job of putting a saleable cover on the newsstands and we flat don't have a choice of *not* being practical to a certain extent.

Wish every one of you could have gotten a prize—but, I'll tell you for sure, we would have had to pay off in dry cow chips after about the first one-tenth of the over-all entries!—Hosstail.

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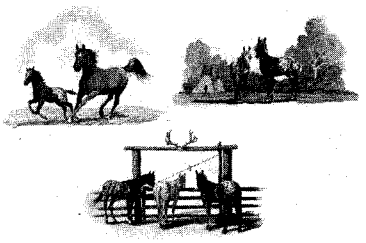

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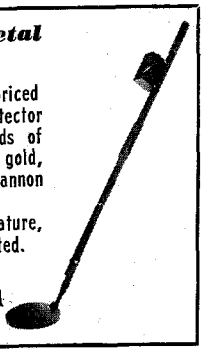

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The Doneys

Dear Sir:

I get your book every month and I can't see how so many people get your book mixed up with the other books. I watch for Walt Coburn's "Tally Book" in it, then I know I have the right one. One of his stories was about my great grand-uncle, Gregory Doney. Some of the Doneys married Cree women like my grandpa did. I'm French and Chippewa Cree and some are just French and Chippewa.

I'm thirty years old now and I miss all my people. My parents are dead, and all my grandparents are gone. So when I read about my family I don't feel so all alone. I'm thanking Walt Coburn for that. I'm one of the only Doneys to have danced at the World's Fair in Seattle, Washington. What I mean by dance is that I Indian danced at the Indian village there. I'm known as the world's best Indian and hoop dancer. I have trophies here that I won on the reservations and I hope to win more.—Albert F. Doney, The Village, Apt. 4-B, Monmouth, Oregon 97361.

Forgotten Stage Stop

Dear Pat and Joe:

I've recently come across a photo of an old stage station located on the Dendora Ranch in Arizona. Frequently used for storage in more recent times, it looks like the typical adobe stagestop which was so common in the far West. If any of your readers have any information concerning this antique station or historical incidents which happened in the area I would appreciate a bit of correspondence. Being an old narrow-gauge and steam railroad fan, I have only one suggestion for improvement on your turrible rags: publish more stories on early western railways and little ghost-town haywire lines.—Michael Honeycutt, 14-701 Purdy Street, Midway City, California.

Lamartine

Dear Joe:

In April TRUE WEST, "Mining, a Game With No Rules," the Lamartine Mine and the town of Lamartine was a delight to our family since we thought this town was completely forgotten. We have made five trips to this spot which can be reached only by foot, horse, or Jeep. We have tried locating the cemetery each trip, but no luck. We would like to know more of the history of this town; maybe you or some of your readers could refer us to some source of information.—H. Schweikle, 1332 Tamara Ct., Waukegan, Illinois.

Mad Stones

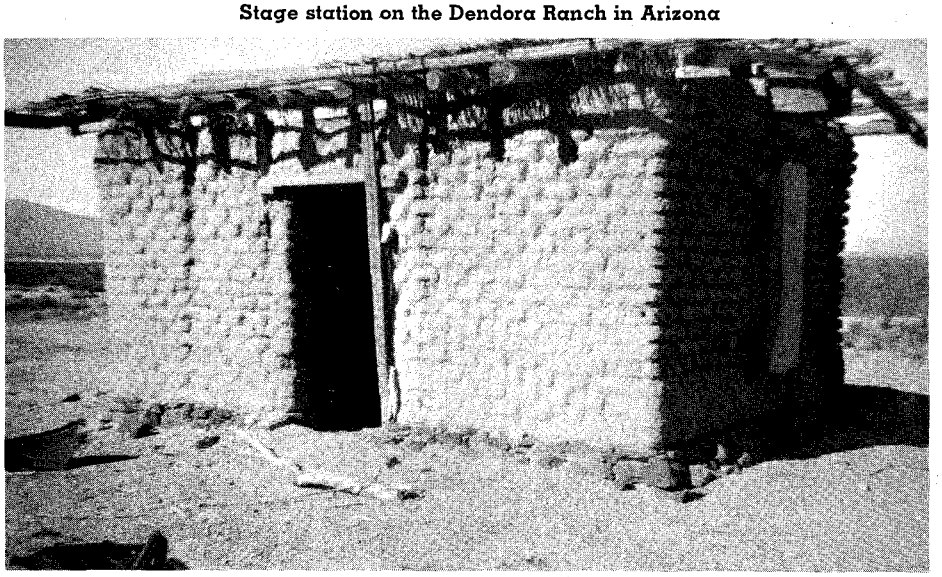
Dear Sirs:

Here's a little more information on mad stones. I had a friend named Jake Grimes of Hutchinson, Kansas, who had a mad stone. Jake was a gun and locksmith, having opened safes from four minutes to eight hours. Jake was much older than I and has passed on years ago. I am seventy-nine and knew Jake when I was eight years old.

A man was bitten by a mad skunk on the calf of his left leg, and lit out for Hutchinson, driving a team with a buckboard a distance of forty-two miles from Haven. One of the horses dropped dead in front of Jake's house and shop (the shop being in front to one side of the lot). Jake's place was only a block from where I was that August day. A crowd collected to see what was going on. I saw

(Continued on page 68)

Stage station on the Dendora Ranch in Arizona



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Gold Canyon

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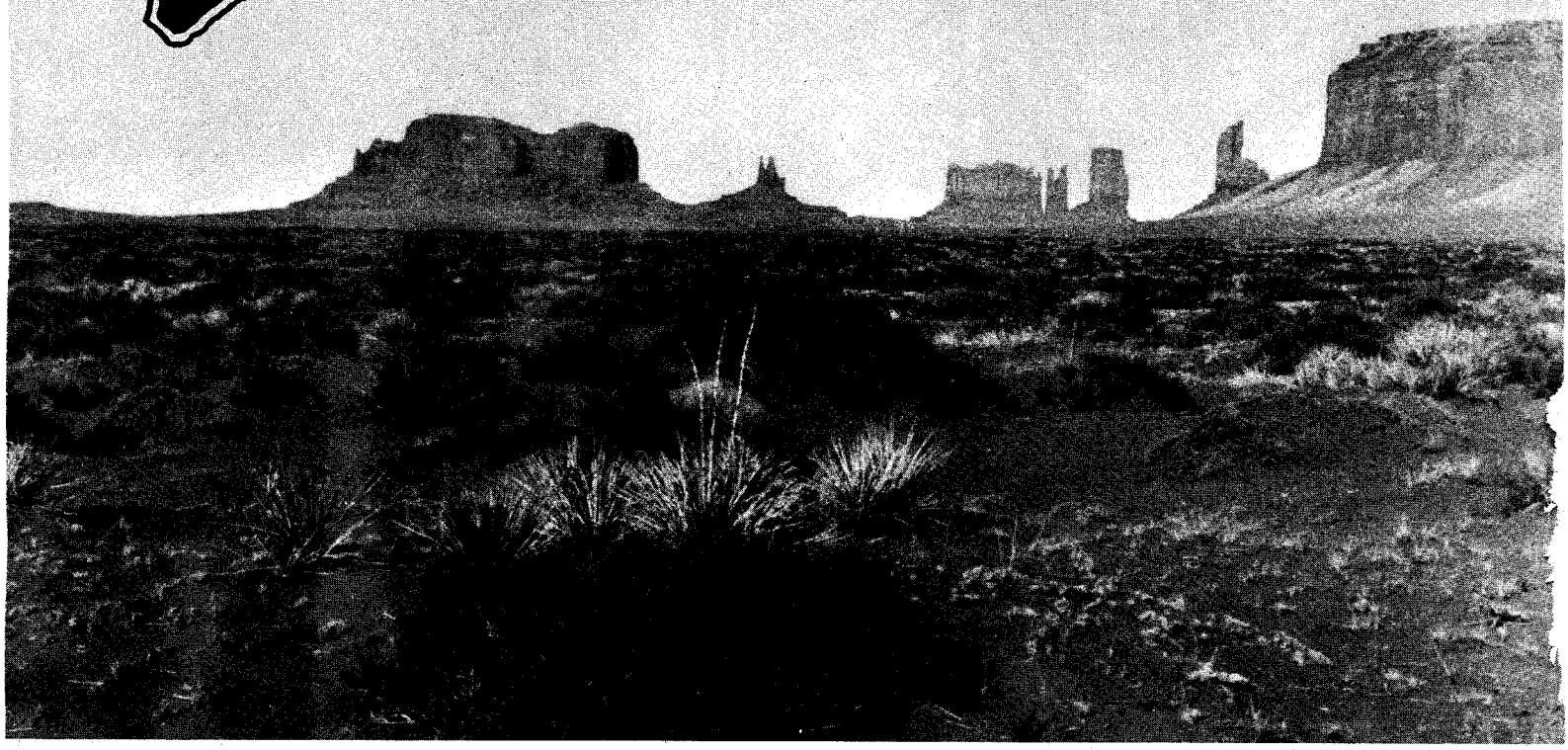

Monument Valley, where Merrick and Mitchell were killed. Merrick Butte is on the extreme left. In the center is Mitchell Butte, where the man whose name it bears was first buried.

By JOHN R. WINSLOWE

Photos Courtesy Author

Author's note: This is the true saga of a lost mine. No year passes without several published stories, or an account of it in some book. It is the most lied about lost mine of them all. Known by a score of titles it is most often referred to as a lost Spanish mine, Lost Merrick-Mitchell Mine, Lost Walcott-McNally Mine and more frequently as John D. Lee's Lost Silver Mine. The yarns generally locate it anywhere west of the New Mexico border to the Colorado River, and usually in Monument Valley astride the Arizona-Utah line. Sometimes Merrick and Mitchell are claimed to have been ex-soldiers—again mysterious prospectors from Colorado of whom nothing is known. Of these stories ninety-eight per cent contain no facts whatever and the other two per cent very few. They are mostly authors' wandering imaginations. My ancestors for about 120 years were Navajo Indian traders in the area of this lost mine, and it is where I grew up and spent a lifetime. Most of the people concerned in this story I knew well, especially those who searched Spanish documents trying to find it before 1900. All the government agents' and investigators' reports concerning it rest in the National Archives, hence, there is little excuse for the story being pure fantasy after 1880. A translation of the Spanish journal concerning it is also available in most libraries. This mine was never "lost."

THE SAGA of Gold Canyon begins after Coronado's expedition of 1540. Its dawn flowered when Antonio de Espejo, a mining engineer from Cordova, departed New Mexico in 1583. Entering what is now Arizona he dispatched exploring parties seeking valuable minerals. One went as far west as Navajo Mountain where Indians conducted it into a small canyon. There they found gold, and a silver lead. From that day to this Navajos have called it Oola Bikooh, or Gold Canyon.

Translators of Espejo's expedition journal recorded by Diego Perez de Luxãn, had trouble in determining the distance traveled because of its archaic Spanish. The most reasonable translation, by Agapito Rey, states that it lay twenty-eight leagues from Cibola (Zuni) to Zaguato, then forty-five leagues due west to the mine. While the league varied widely during Spanish history, it was at this time approximately 3.45 miles. These figures would hit Gold Canyon close enough.

After exploring and roughly mapping the country around Navajo Mountain, which they called Sierra Panoche, the small expedition retired with some of the ore to the main party in Arizona's Verde Valley.

The next known party of Spaniards to enter that vast and wild country of inhospitable canyons occurred in 1661. Halting in seventy-mile-long Navajo Canyon, the easiest trail to Gold Canyon, this party cut that date in the cliff ruins, so named Inscription House because of their act. The discovering archaeologists in 1909 interpreted it as "———— S. Haperio ano dom 1661." They were unable to read the first part of it. A later archaeologist gave the inscription as "CHOS 1661 A dn." When I first saw it in the mud-plastered wall, and still in good shape, it in no way resembled either one. Neither the names nor letters can be fitted with any chronicled Spanish explorer. However, there were many unrecorded "unauthorized" exploring parties seeking gold in the Spanish Southwest during those centuries.

The part not destroyed of the Gold Canyon inscription, made the same year and cut in the cliff wall reads, ". . . Junipero ano dom 1661." As far as anyone has discovered, it doesn't track out either.

According to Navajo clan history, this party and two others lost heavily in attacks made on them while working the mine. The story relates that the death of one Spaniard cost the lives of thirty-five to forty Navajos. This seems to have been especially true in an attack made on them after leaving the canyon when they were chased onto Cummings Mesa. It is today known in Navajo as Nocki Cummenthi, a contraction of words meaning, "Where the Mexicans were chased up," i. e., into the rocks, where they stood off the Indians.

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Thomas V. Keam, an Englishman accused of having a direct hand in the slaying of the two young prospectors.

Two centuries later, a district chief and a renegade to boot, Taddytin, and his brother, Hosteen Zon Kelli, used this canyon to hide stolen stock. Their depredations into southern Utah during the Civil War were so serious Mormon settlers organized a frontier battalion to keep them out. Nevertheless, during the 1870s Taddytin returned to raiding periodically.

IN THE 19th Century three men named Merrick were involved in the lost mine. The first, his given name unknown to me, went north from Mexico to Santa Fe in 1855. He had a map which was copied from a document found in an ancient Mission church.

Outfitting a party, he led his men around the bad Indian country directly into Gold Canyon. They loaded themselves down with the largest pieces of gold they could find, and departed southward, avoiding local Indians. The party crossed the Colorado River west of Grand Canyon at what became Pierce's Ferry.

Mojave Indians jumped them in the desert, killing all but Merrick and two others. Although badly wounded, they escaped into California but arrived with nothing but the clothes on their backs.

In Los Angeles Merrick, then past sixty, unsuccessfully tried to organize a return party. Discouraged because no one would believe his fantastic story, he then went north to his brother, John, in Marysville.

John Merrick promised to make the trip when his brother's strength was sufficiently recovered. That did not happen. Merrick died the same year. Having lost the map, he did not leave John one drawn from memory, but merely described four prominent landmarks and told him the secret of how to enter Gold Canyon.

In 1876 John Merrick and sixteen men passed through Nevada, cut over southwestern Utah, crossed the Colorado River at Ute Ford and went into the canyon. The Navajos were aware of their presence. After working three weeks, the party came out and got as far as the Rio Virgin River in the Arizona Strip before Paiute Indians attacked. In a running fight lasting two days, Merrick's companions were all slain. He escaped into a dense thicket of cedar trees, suffering from many wounds.

The "last survivor" of an Indian fight who alone knows the secret of untold wealth always lowers my credulity to the vanishing point. Nevertheless, this portion of Merrick family history has been well authenticated.

Merrick hid out successfully. Chewing cedar bark he plugged bullet holes and worked his way up the Rio Virgin to Mormon Dixie. The Mormons there cared for him and, when he was well enough to travel, sold him a horse and outfit, for which he paid in raw gold from his pockets.

Merrick reached Marysville with several large pieces of gold left. Never tiring of telling how much remained to be dug out, he still couldn't get anyone to believe him. Just too much gold in one small place to be true, or so his friends thought.

His twenty-two-year-old son, Robert, listened to everything his father related. He decided to go to Colorado. After promising to stop by Gold Canyon, his father then gave him the secret of how to gain entry.

Hosteen Chi, the Navajo who took the author into Gold Canyon, and apparently one of the few men to bring gold out.

Alone, Robert made what appears to have been a leisurely horseback ride. Entering the canyon easily, he found no solid chunks of gold but did fill his saddle bags with ore from both prospects. From Navajo Mountain he proceeded directly through the area controlled by the renegade headman, Hoskinny. Passing through the majestic red sandstone formations of Monument Valley, he crossed the San Juan River to Bluff, Utah. The next day he went directly east to a small trading post owned and operated by the Mitchell family at what is now Aneth. Robert stayed several days with these friendly people. He showed them his ore and became well acquainted with twenty-one-year-old Herndon Mitchell.

Going on to Colorado, Merrick arrived at Mancos where he left the ore with an assayer. After visiting two or three mining camps he returned for the assay report. The gold ran $30,000 per ton—a stupendous sum.

I do not know what the silver assay ran, having seen only the report on the gold in the possession of John Wetherill at Kayenta. He kept it til the day he died. He had received it from Herndon Mitchell's father after the trading post was sold to the Gillette family who ran it for the next twenty years.

FAILING to interest others in returning with him to the mine, Merrick set out alone. When he reached the Mitchells, however, he persuaded Herndon to accompany him—over the parents' objections. They warned that Hoskinny, his son Hoskinny Begay, and Paiute Indians allied with them were all murderous outlaws.

Merrick and Mitchell took along three big pack mules belonging to the latter's father. Traveling at night they sneaked through Indian country into Gold Canyon.

Meanwhile horse-thief Taddytin had cached nearly fifty head in the canyon. When he went there one day to bring them out, he pulled up short at the secret entrance. The tracks of two white men and shod stock were plainly visible.

A crafty, tough Navajo, Taddytin slipped around investigating. Discovering the tracks went down-canyon and that the two men had been nowhere near the stolen horses, he strode boldly into their camp at noon. Merrick and Mitchell were eating, preparatory to leaving, and he joined them. Their stock stood in camp. Taddytin asked what the filled panniers contained.

Reaching into one, Mitchell handed him an oblong piece of metal, telling him in Navajo that it was gold. Of course Taddytin and his *bravos* had seen the prospect holes many times, as well as the wall inscriptions, which his grandfather told him were put there many long years before by the Nocki (Mexicans). Until that moment, however, the possibility of gold had meant nothing to him.

After eating, Taddytin helped pack up and came out of the canyon with them. He continued until the two white men pointed at Navajo Mountain, then turned

Henry Chee Dodge, long-time Tribal Council Chairman. In 1882 the Fort Defiance Indian Agent sent Dodge with a government farmer to Blue Canyon to see what they could find out about the murders of Merrick and Mitchell.

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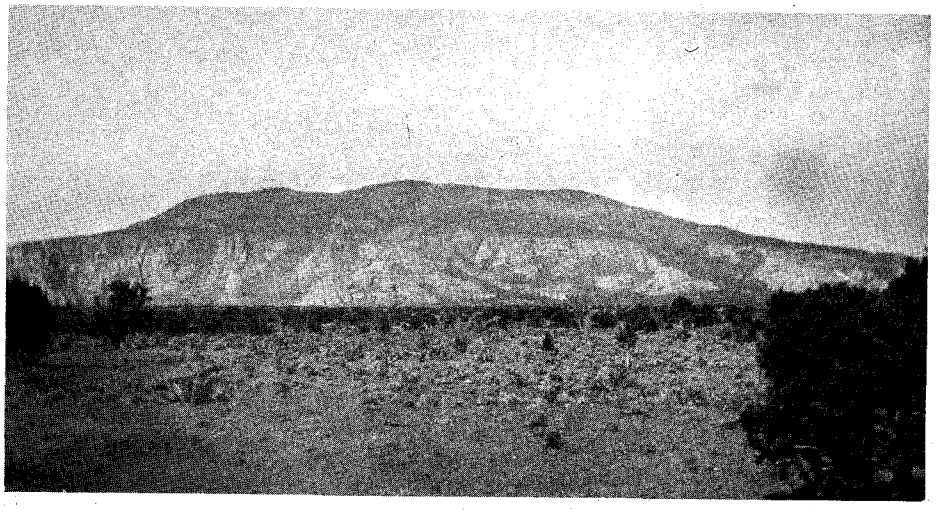


Navajo Mountain which overlooks Gold Canyon

toward Navajo Canyon and his hogan on Kaibeto Plateau.

Some weeks later, on learning the white prospectors had been slain in Monument Valley, Taddytin hurried to Gold Canyon with Hosteen Zon Kelli. They decided to destroy all evidence of the mine so that future prospectors could not recognize it. They filled holes and closed two tunnels by leveling off dumps, and started erasing wall inscriptions with sandstones. Some were removed easily but those cut deep were almost impossible to eradicate. Tiring of the job, they also grew spooky on the site where dead men had been (or so Zon Kelli described their attitude to me). The two Indians came out before finishing the work.

Taddytin hammered the piece of gold into a thin band bracelet for one of his wives. In 1916 he was killed by the Tuba City police chief while resisting arrest. His wife continued wearing the bracelet. I saw it often on her arm when she came to trade at the post. When she died in 1928, it was buried with her.

Merrick and Mitchell did not see any Indians until the surprise attack on them one sunup. Wounded during the first volley, Mitchell escaped into a small cave in the nearby butte that bears his name today. Merrick, also wounded, managed to get almost two miles away before being overhauled and killed.

Mitchell held the Indians off for some time. During that period he wrote part of a letter to his mother, realizing that before long the Indians would get him. When they did, the Navajos and Paiutes plundered the camp, taking everything of use.

Eventually news of the young men's deaths reached Bluff via friendly Navajos. A messenger was dispatched to Mitchell's father at Aneth. On arriving at Bluff he met a party of twenty cowboys returning from Monument Valley. They buried the badly decomposed bodies, Merrick where he fell and Mitchell in the cave. The latter's bones were subsequently removed by the family.

The cowboys brought back ore rich in gold and silver, the letter to Mitchell's mother found under his body, and a piece of quilt given him when he left home.

News of the rich ore spread throughout the Southwest. Many prospectors and wishful thinkers entered western Navajo country without the faintest idea where to look.

MEANWHILE Jonathan P. Williams, a professional miner, moved his wife, three sons and a daughter to Marysville from Oregon. While prospecting the Mother Lode country he came to know John Merrick well and, of course, heard the story of the lost mine. Williams decided to try his luck in that area, moving his family to Blue Canyon north of Tuba City where he homesteaded in 1882. Only after reaching Arizona did he learn of Robert Merrick's death. His homestead, never proved up, and a trading post he put in, were about seventy-five miles from what became known as the Lost Merrick-Mitchell Mine.

The elder Mitchell demanded that the murderers be punished for their crime. Indian Agent Galen Eastman at Fort Defiance sent a government farmer and Henry Chee Dodge, last of the great Navajo tribal leaders, to Blue Canyon. They carried a written request that Williams aid them in contacting Hoskinny to learn what they could about the killing. Williams took William A. (Buckskin Billy) Ross and went with them. After investigating, they reported to the agent, in person, swearing to affidavits of what they had learned. These and the agent's report were forwarded to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs.

That same year Phillip Zoller, working for Thomas V. Keam, also made affidavits accusing his employer and one James Stevens of contriving the murder of Merrick and Mitchell, if not actually ordering it. His affidavits are dated June 21, and August 3, 1882 and are filed in the National Archives' collection of papers on the case.

Keam was an Englishman who had enlisted in the First New Mexico Volunteers in 1865. Released after less than a two-year hitch, he held various governmental positions and ran a trading post at Fort Defiance while trying to obtain an appointment as Indian Agent. Leaving there he established another post in Hopi country in a canyon named for him. Always jealous of and at odds with whoever happened to be Indian Agent, he was described by contemporary traders as "one sneaky, cheesy son of a.....!"

Keam considered the great western Navajo country his private preserve as far as valuable minerals were concerned. When the report of Merrick's and Mitchell's murder reached him, he rushed west to see Hoskinny. The district chief knew him well, having gone often to trade at Keam's Canyon.

On his return from this visit, as sworn to by Zoller, Keam had one of Mitchell's mules, some of the ore and Merrick's rifle obtained from Hoskinny.

Informed of this and thinking he might have more information about the death of his son, Mitchell went down from Aneth to see the trader. Keam callously denied knowing anything and charged him $50 for the mule before letting him have it.

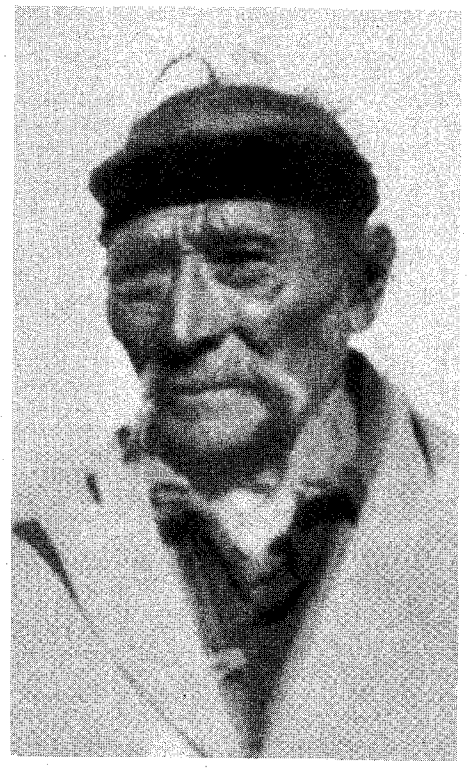
Thereafter Keam conducted parties of prospectors all through western Navajo country in desperate attempts to find the lost mine. He offered Hoskinny a share and $10,000 to show him where it was. The old chief took him on many wild goose chases, never divulging the location—for the simple reason that he didn't know. Keam did find copper ore at Copper Mine in Keam District (also named for him).

From then to this day, Navajos have claimed Paiutes killed Merrick and Mitchell. They, in turn, swore the Navajos did it. The fact is, both groups saw a chance to get the stock and whatever few possessions the two men had, and had joined forces to murder them.

Paiute Chief "Old" Posey, and the Navajos, Wolfkiller, Hoskinny, Hoskinny Begay and Bitani were suspected from the first. In their affidavits, Williams and Ross related that Hoskinny had told them Keam had asserted some months before that he would soon oust the Indian Agent at Fort Defiance, assuming the position himself. He told the Indians to keep all prospectors out of their country.

Nothing happened in the way of justice and the investigation continued only because Mitchell kept after the government agents. Then in 1883 two prospectors, Samuel Walcott and James McNally, were

Hosteen Zon Kelli



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killed by Hoskinny's clan. He and two other Navajos were arrested and jailed for about one year at Fort Wingate, New Mexico.

This episode brings in the many stories designating the lost mine as that of Walcott and McNally. They were never within a hundred miles of Gold Canyon. With an old man named Ericson they worked a claim in upper Blue Canyon which has its beginnings deep in Black Mountain. They had taken out a considerable amount of gold. Running short of supplies, Walcott and McNally started north with it to re-outfit in Utah. They were riding a regular trail off the northern tip of Black Mountain when McNally was shot from ambush at Lolomi Point. Walcott kept pounding leather and had gotten as far north as El Capitan when he was killed by another party of Navajos off the San Juan River.

STORIES PERSIST that the lost mine contains only silver. Keam asserted the white metal assayed $800 to the ton. This seems to indicate he had some of the recovered ore assayed. Then John D. Lee, executed in 1877 for leading the 1857 Mountain Meadows massacre in Southern Utah of peaceful immigrants en route to California, entered the picture.

In his memoirs written while awaiting execution and in letters to members of his several families, he mentioned having located a silver mine. Yet not once did he give a clue to its location. After establishing a ferry at the confluence of Paria Creek with the Colorado River while hiding from Federal officers, he spent much time prospecting (1870-1875).

His lost mine, often claimed to be that of Merrick-Mitchell, ranges anywhere from Monument Valley to the Grand Canyon. Most writers call it the "Lost Pesh-la-Chi Mine." They have been told, and believe, that the name is a Navajo word, meaning "white iron." Navajos do call silver white iron, however the words are "beesh ligai."

On establishing the ferry, Lee kept the wife known as Aunt Emma and her children in charge of running a trading post. She continued doing so after Lee's death, until selling to the Mormon Church in 1878. Two years later she married Franklin French. They lived at times in Holbrook and Winslow, Arizona. When I knew her as "Grandma" French, she was greatly respected everywhere for her community welfare work.

Among the host of John D. Lee silver-lode tales is one about his hiding seven cans of gold nuggets at the mine. The truth is that Lee left at the ferry nearly 100 pounds of silver ore and one small can of gold. Aunt Emma took all this with her when she left. She never admitted that Lee ever told her anything about his mine. Dozens of hopeful prospectors tried to get information from her.

After she married French, he spent at least twenty years, off and on, searching an area near the juncture of the two Colorado Rivers above Grand Canyon. He found a tunnel and prospect holes but no valuable minerals.

Williams believed he could find Gold Canyon. He spent most of 1883, and all of 1884 in the Navajo Mountain country. Part of the time Hoskinny tried to help find the canyon. Williams' two oldest sons, Benjamin and William, accompanied him. They must have searched nearly all of the hundreds of canyons in the country. Better known as Ben and Bill, his sons had left their inscriptions in all the canyons I visited in later years. They chiseled on the walls, "Ben & Bill, 1884." I never found their father's name cut anywhere.

Williams never gave up hunting Gold Canyon. In 1890, while still seeking, he discovered flour gold on the San Juan River. Organizing a company, backed by druggist Charley Cahn of Winslow, he put in a camp on the river near the Paiute village of Boschini. There he built a barge and installed a steam engine on it. His method of recovering the gold proved entirely too impractical and the project was finally abandoned.

Selling his Blue Canyon buildings to the Government for use as a school in 1896, he moved his family to Winslow. On a trip to Marysville he carefully went over the whole Merrick story of Gold Canyon with the widow and oldest children. They remembered the name of the church in Monterrey, Mexico, where the first Merrick said he copied the map from parchment records.

Returning to Winslow, Williams tarried briefly before heading for the old mission. A few weeks later his wife received a jubilant letter saying that success had crowned his efforts. He had a copy of the old Spanish map, and a translation made for him by a priest. Her next word of him came through the American consul at Juarez when the latter forwarded a few of Williams' personal effects. He had been killed by bandits before reaching the border. No map, not one piece of paper concerning the mine, was found on his body.

The rest of their lives Ben and Bill periodically entered the Navajo Mountain country searching for Gold Canyon.

AFTER THE KILLING of Merrick and Mitchell, prospectors entered the forbidden country in droves. Before 1900 more than 150 were to remain permanently. It was their graveyard. Ten times more prospectors lost their lives hunting Gold Canyon than the toll taken by Arizona's famous Lost Dutchman Mine in the Superstition Mountains. Even after the turn of the century and up to the outbreak of World War II, at least one prospector and sometimes four or five, vanished therein annually. Sometimes the bodies were found, most often not. The known list is long and of little importance here.

Some of the slain were foreigners. Late in 1924 I crossed the Colorado River below the mouth of the San Juan with Homer Arhn en route to Escalante, Utah. On a sand bar two Japanese were panning gold, making five to seven dollars a day, they told us. On our return two weeks later both lay in their rude camp —shot dead.

In 1928 Hosteen Zon Kelli gave my mother at Inscription House trading post an assayer's crucible often carried by prospectors. I have it today and on the bottom it bears the impressed stamp of the Battersea Pottery Works, England. Zon Kelli told me it came from

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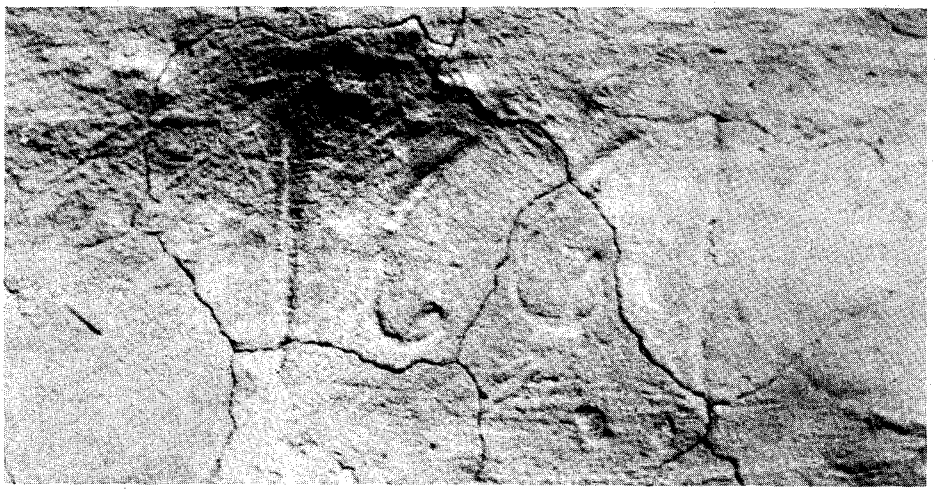
Dick Tate (1928), son of Hosteen Taddytin, helped his father grind inscriptions from the rock walls of the canyons. The numerals 1661 (below) in the mud-plastered wall of an old ruin were still faintly visible when the photo was made.



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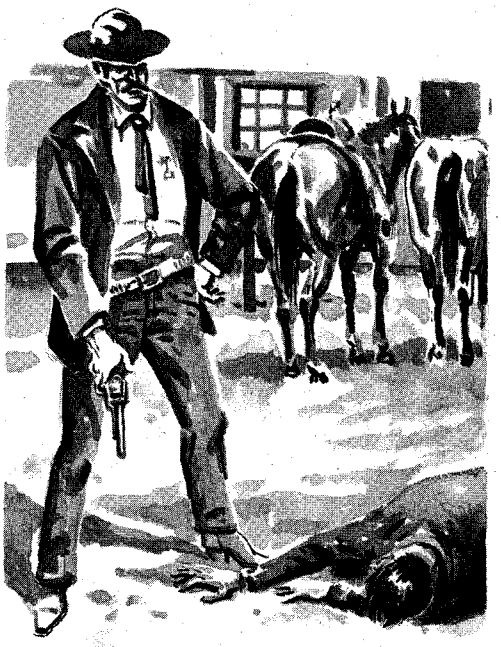
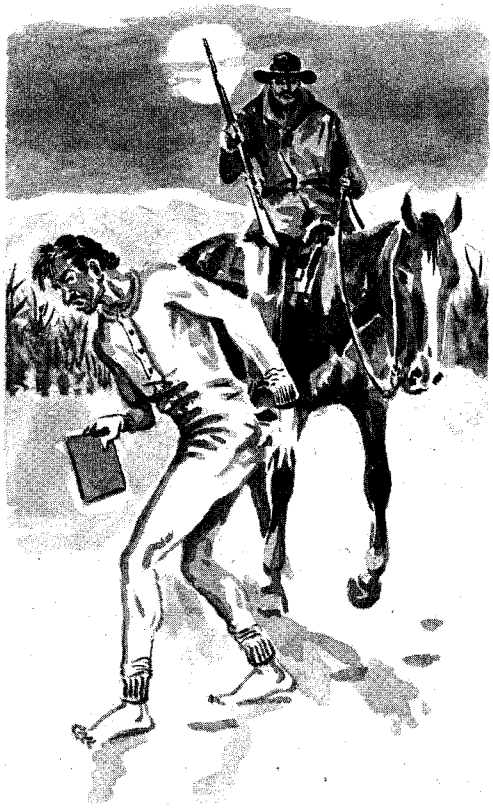
THE TRAGIC WARDS

Two men—two women—double tough, double reckless. It took fire, flood, mob action, and death by one's own hand to finally wipe them out . . .

By THE FITZPATRICKS

Illustrated by Al M. Napoletano





IT IS SAID that bad luck can run in families. A hoodoo, jinx or curse. We don't know about that, but we do know about the Ward family. The tragic Wards. We heard of them soon after our family arrived on Lay Creek, September 20, 1886, and saw the drama of their strange lives played to the final curtain.

Colorado was rough country in those days. East of the Continental Divide, the Plains Indians had been subjugated, and commerce and culture were firmly established in the towns along the base of the Rocky Mountains. It was that way in Utah, too, where the Mormons had made their "great leap forward." Schools, churches, theaters, lodge halls, railroads and thriving business places were everywhere. Well, not quite everywhere. There was still a strip of Colorado as primitive as in the days of the mountain men. This lay between the Front Range of the Rockies and Green River, between the Colorado-Wyoming line and Grand (Colorado) River. The part of it we knew best is now known as Moffat County, Colorado. It was and is an area of sagebrush flats, cedar and piñon hills, a few piney mountains, Bear River and scores of creeks. These are for the most part dry, but with good springs of water at intervals.

When we first came here, the country was dominated by big cattle companies. Then came a few adventurous souls to file on homesteads or preemption claims. Usually they took land around a spring. The cattlemen did not like this, nor did they like for the new settlers to steal their calves and butcher their fat yearlings. This finally led to the employment of professional patrolmen such as Tom Horn.

We had neighbors. Anyone who lived within fifty miles was a "neighbor." The nearest might be five miles away. Among ours were coal miners from Wales, timberjacks from Wisconsin, gold miners from Australia, corn farmers from Kansas and sharecroppers from Kentucky. There were English, Irish, Scotch, African, German and many other nationalities. There were college graduates and those who could neither read nor write; men of high principles and character, and some of criminal ways. Among the desperate and dangerous breed were Butch Cassidy, Harry Tracy, Billy Sawtelle and Tom Horn. But no less desperate, and no less dangerous, was Joe Ward.

Joe Ward's coming to what is now Moffat County was shrouded in darkness and secrecy, with the dogs of the law figuratively snapping at his heels. The first settler to see Ward was Charlie Duffy. The Duffy ranch lay where Bear River emerges from the canyon, ten miles south of Lay post office. It was a bitter November evening. Duffy was clearing brush from a hay meadow near the river when he heard a hail from the opposite shore. Going to the river bank, he engaged in a shouted conversation with the man on the far side, who was asking whether the river might be forded.

"Not now. In summer yes, but now go to the bridge they are building. It's only three miles," Duffy yelled in reply.

If the man heard, he paid no heed. Instead, he divested himself of his clothes, picked up a stout driftwood club and moved out on the ice that fringed the river.

"He knocked off the sharp edges of the ice and lowered himself into the water," Duffy recounted. "I figured right then he was either a mighty hardy customer or a foolhardy one. He held his bundle of clothes high, as the water came up nearly to his armpits. The river bottom is covered by cobblestones and boulders, but he eased along, not stumbling. I felt sure a cramp would get him in that icy water."

The stranger made it across, broke away the thin ice from the sheet that extended into the river, and crawled out purple with cold but undaunted.

"I'm watching this whole performance," Duffy told. "He slips on his clothes and comes up to me grinning. I figure for sure that I'm looking at a very tough *hombre*."

JUST HOW TOUGH he was, not even Duffy could know at this point. The stranger, six feet of well-knit man, grinned through a week's growth of red-brown beard as he came forward, slipping on his clothes.

"My name's Ward—Joe Ward," he explained. "I'm traveling kind of light as you can see. I'm looking for a job—any kind of a job. Right now I'm looking

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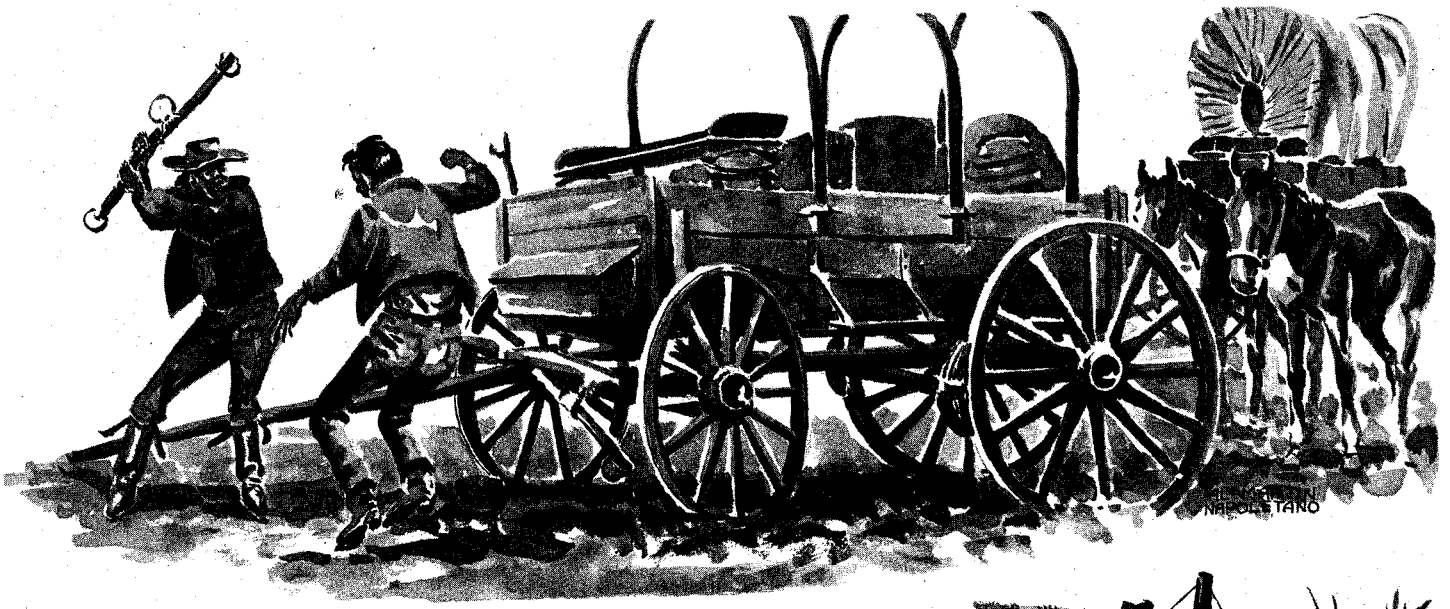

hardest for some grub. What's the chances?"

No settler ever turned a hungry person away, so Duffy assured the stranger that the chances were good, and immediate. The subject of a job could be discussed later. They went to the house and in short order Duffy had a good meal of leftovers and venison steak. After breakfast the next morning Ward proved he knew the customs of the country, by turning to and washing the dishes.

The fellow appeared to be clean in his person, and his talk was intelligent, with flashes of humor. Duffy told him he might remain for a while at least and help a little with the work of caring for the livestock in exchange for board. In a few days so well did he fit in and take hold of the work of feeding cattle, doing chores, and helping on a dam Duffy was building across the river, that Duffy agreed to take him on at going wages. Thus they got acquainted and became friendly.

Before long, the hired man confided in Duffy that he was "on the dodge," having shot a man in Leadville. In that boom mining camp he had been engaged in freighting and ore hauling, using the two four-horse teams and wagons he owned. He told Duffy that his wife and young son and daughter were still in the mining town.

"Hattie is a good man herself," he told Duffy. "She can run the outfit. We got a teamster and she can hire another. Maybe I'll try going back some of these days. Or maybe I will try to bring the family out here."

Ward asked a number of questions about ranch land and Duffy told him of places he might homestead, including a section of river bottom below his own place.

It was the next autumn, after haying was finished, that Ward told Duffy he would like to hire a horse and saddle for a trip he contemplated.

"I been writing the woman back and forth," he confided. "She has got a good chance to sell out and leave. She and the young 'uns are coming in one wagon and the other wagon will be driven by a feller she hired. I aim to meet them in Egeria Park, as the road from there here is pretty bad and hard to follow."

Duffy told him to go ahead and take the horse and saddle and it wouldn't cost him anything. Duffy had found Ward to be an agreeable person to have around, a good worker, and then and ever afterward he maintained that Ward and his family were good neighbors. Many would disagree with this opinion, but that wouldn't change Duffy's mind. He was one rancher who did his own thinking, did not interfere with his neighbors nor let them infringe on his rights, be they big or little. Duffy was unusual in more ways than one. Handsome, wiry, goodnatured and fond of fun and especially of dancing, he always made a hit with both men and ladies. Years later, when he was eighty, he could still dance with the grace of a professional.

It was about a month later that Ward showed up again at Duffy's. He was riding a big work horse and leading Duffy's saddled horse. He said he had decided to take Duffy's advice and file for a homestead on the land at the "Government" bridge, three miles below Duffy's on Bear River.

A day or two later Duffy rode down to get acquainted with Ward's family. He also met a man whom Ward introduced as "Tagert." (This man, J. L. Tagert, tells of his connection with the Wards in an article in the archives of the Colorado Historical Society.)

Duffy supposed that Tagert was the hired man who Ward had told him was helping Hattie with the freight outfit during Joe's enforced absence from their business. It would be a good many months before he found out differently. He had no way of knowing what had happened to that hired hand. In fact, all that Duffy knew about Ward was what that close-mouthed individual had chosen to tell him. That wasn't much.

WHAT HAD TRANSPIRED before that cold evening when Ward first showed up at Duffy's was enough to set Joe Ward apart as a tough customer in a country where toughness was not rare. Even before the episode in Leadville which had resulted in Joe's flight and eventual appearance at Duffy's, he had been in Egeria Park. This was in 1883. Taking one of the wagons and a team, he had left Leadville and started out to

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try to find a place where there was good grass land to be homesteaded, where game and fish abounded and where he could find expression for some of his numerous, although unorthodox, talents. Near the headwaters of what is now the Yampa River, but which all old-timers knew as the Bear, Ward found free land with lush grass, clear cold streams teeming with trout, rolling hills and mountains with trees affording shelter for many kinds of wild game, and logs for buildings, corrals and fences. Not least of the attractions of the country were the scattered herds of cattle growing fat on the succulent grass.

Ward filed his homestead on the spot where the town of Yampa was later founded. In a country where a large proportion of citizens were there because they didn't dare be anywhere else, it was not hard to find those who would do almost anything to turn a quick dollar. Ward found two such men without difficulty. They fitted in perfectly with the plan he had in mind. After explanations, instructions and the proper agreement on compensation, they went to work. Within a few days they had found, killed, skinned and had ready several fat yearling steers. These they acquired without the formality of consulting the owners. With these carcasses loaded on his wagon and concealed under a big wagon sheet, the Ward Wholesale Meat project was on its way.

In Leadville, Joe disposed of the meat without difficulty. But like many a thriving business, Ward's foundered on the shoals of alcohol. With the beef money in his pocket Joe went the rounds of Harrison Avenue. Sometime during the whingding, he and a miner became embroiled to the point where resort was had to arms. When the old blackpowder smoke cleared away, the miner would mine no more. Joe was on his way, alone and afoot, for Charlie Duffy's on Bear River, although at the moment Joe didn't know where he was headed and didn't care much just so it was away from Leadville. The miners predominated there and they didn't like the idea of people drilling holes in anything but hard rock, and particularly not in their fellow miners. It was no uncommon sight to see that kind of driller being held up to scorn by a length of hoist cables around his neck. J. L. Tagert tells of glimpsing two such ex-drillers swinging gently in the Leadville breeze the morning he left that city in the fall of 1884, a few hours after Hattie Ward, her children and hired man left.

So it was that when Ward took off on Charlie Duffy's horse, he had already gotten word to Hattie to sell off any excess baggage, load all that was left on the two wagons, and come to Wolcott. This was a stop on the Denver & Rio Grande Railroad three days' travel from Leadville. A day after Joe reached Wolcott, Hattie and her two four-horse outfits pulled in.

It is likely they lost no time in getting on the road for the ranch in Egeria Park. The first night after Joe joined them they camped at State bridge on the Grand (now Colorado) River. The next night they no doubt camped up in Gore Canyon, about where Sheephorn Creek meets the Grand. There were five persons in the party—Ward, Hattie, the boy Clover, the girl Etta, and the hired man, Charlie Fox.

Two of these witnesses talked later—much later. Beside a glowing campfire, with agreeable companions, Clover told of what happened in that camp at the Sheephorn. In her cups, "Old Hat," as she came to be known, told of the gory incident of which she was likely the cause.

Since Hattie had a bed all arranged in one of the wagons for herself and the two children, Joe had for the two nights shared the bed with Charlie Fox. What Joe thought of this arrangement is not recorded.

That second morning they were up before dawn and as the sun peeked over the Gore Range the men were busy preparing for the road. Joe was just about to slip the neck-yoke onto a wagon tongue when he felt a tap on his shoulder. Looking up, he saw the huge figure of Charlie Fox.

"You don't need to bother with that, Ward," the other told him. He was a big man, an inch taller than Joe, and there was a mean look on his face.

"What do you mean?" Joe wanted to know.

"What I mean is that I don't need no help. You ain't got no stick in this outfit no more. You been voted out. We don't need you no more. So get on that there horse of yourn and point him down the road. If I ever see you again I'll kill you."

The whole situation must have dawned on Ward in the two seconds he stared at the other. Then, in one swift motion he stooped, grabbed up the neck-yoke he had dropped, and as he stepped back to avoid the murderous blow Fox was about to deliver, he swung the neck-yoke and literally knocked out the brains of the other. To make the matter final, he took the revolver from a holster on the wagon seat and put a bullet in the vanquished one's neck. Without a second look at the slain man, he savagely ordered the woman to help with the harnessing.

At this moment J. L. Tagert drew his horse to a stop and got down to talk in the manner of those meeting on a lonely road. As he rounded the front wagon, he saw the still but eloquent form of the dead man lying in front of one of the wagon wheels. Tagert was no newcomer to the West. He knew the wisdom of "a still tongue in a wise head."

"Did you hear the shot?" Ward asked him, no doubt feeling that some explanation was in order.

"Yeah, thought somebody was shooting at a deer," Tagert said diplomatically.

"I was," Ward told him. "Pullin' a bead and this feller got in the way."

They left it that way. Tagert helped with the harnessing as any Westerner would have done and when they were ready to move, Ward pulled the body out of the way of the wheel, climbed into the wagon, and the day's long grind was on. All being headed for the same place, they traveled together, Tagert spelling Mrs. Ward at the chore of handling the four lines.

The road swung back away from the river, two or three miles south of where the present "Trough Road" runs. It came down on the Blue River which it crossed, then crossed Grand River, turned to the north and west over Gore Pass, and so to the Ward ranch which they reached in a few days without mishap.

JOE WARD had reached the ranch home of his dreams, but the dream was short-lived. The very day he arrived, a rancher, Tom Gibbs, was hunting horses on Watson Creek and came on two men butchering a fat beef. These were the men who had supplied Ward with the beef he had sold in Leadville and doubtlessly were getting another load ready for delivery.

Tom Gibbs quickly spread the alarm. The ranchers were not ignorant of the kind of man Ward was, nor of his dealings with the cattle rustlers. Mark Choate and L. L. Wilson were delegated to arrest the miscreants. Before they left on this mission, word came of the finding of the body of Charlie Fox in Gore Canyon. It needed no Sherlock Holmes to put two and two together and come up with answers that put Joe Ward in the canyon about the time Fox had died—so his name was added to the list of the three most wanted men.

Alex Gray was coroner and he "sat on the body" of Fox, as the saying was. A little deduction concerning the condition of deceased's skull and the bloodstains on the neck-yoke which Ward hadn't bothered to obliterate still further put the bee on Ward.

The cattle-killers the lawmen couldn't find, nor were they ever apprehended. But Ward was snapped up and held. Tagert fully expected to be called as a witness, but decided to hold his tongue until asked to testify. It wasn't positive that Ward would be convicted, and a loose Joe Ward as an enemy was nothing to be deliberately cultivated. There were no organized courts anywhere in the area, no rancher there was versed in law, and Joe Ward was eating his head off at Choate's and Wilson's expense while his fate was being debated. One effective remedy could have been applied, but most of the settlers, being decent folk who went to church when there was a church to go to and feeling squeamish about facing their children with blood on their hands, didn't like the idea of halting the flow of groceries down Joe's throat by putting a tight rope around it.

What they finally did do was probably the best all-around solution from their viewpoint. They gave Joe a week to get rid of his ranch and get out of the country, with the added incentive of sudden death if he didn't leave or if he ever returned. Joe was no fool despite his violent nature. He sold the relinquishment of his homestead claim on the land to a man named Van Camp, father of

(Continued on page 56)

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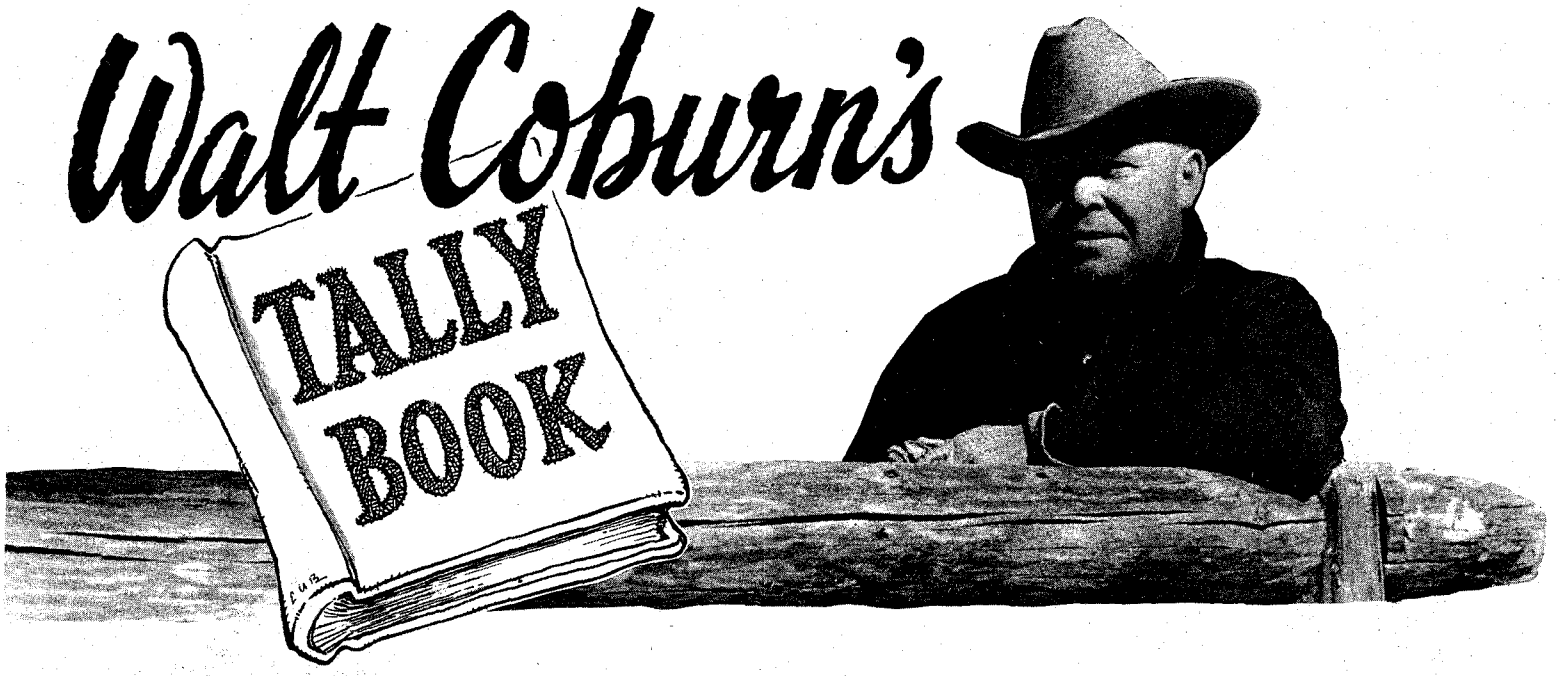
Walt Coburn's TALLY BOOK



TAKE ANY ONE of the three brothers, and each one was deserving of his own separate story. Each of the Deniff boys was a gambler in his own right. But it was when the three brothers worked together as a three-man team, that the flair for genius cropped out.

In order that you may know them each as a separate individual, each man with a different set of characteristics, as unalike as the brothers differed each from the other in looks and physical build, I'd like to list them separately, so that you might study each one and get a picture of him in your mind. Then you will have less trouble believing this saga of the gambling trio when they worked together.

At times there was humorous, almost ludicrous comedy to the act they put on. But don't forget even for a split second that it was a hell of a dangerous game they played. The stakes were high in the big gambling houses in Montana, Colorado, Nevada, the Dakotas, Arizona, New Mexico, and California. Doubly dangerous when they crossed the border into Mexico to play the border towns from Juarez to Tia Juana, Agua Prieta, Cananea, Naco, Nogales, and Mexicali in between. For the most part, every gambler packed a belly gun hidden within reach of his deft-fingered gambler's hand. Or below the border, a hidden knife.

Sam Deniff was the oldest of the three. Some claimed he was the best gambler. There was no doubt at all about his being the most dangerous.

Sam stood six feet without his high-heeled boots on. Good shoulders and slim bellied, and a good pair of legs. He had a smattering of prize ring science which made him a hard man to whip in a barroom fight. He was sandy haired, handsome, clean shaven, with an easy grin that seldom reached his cold, shrewd eyes that puckered at the corners, with a sense of humor that all the Deniff brothers had. He was easy to get along with, except when he was drinking. Whiskey was apt to make him quarrelsome. But Sam never drank when he was gambling for real money, because he knew that it was bad business. And first and last, the Deniff boys were businessmen.

They had their own saloon in Zortman, a mining and cowtown in the Little Rockies. They owned a ranch where they ran cattle. Some of the horses they owned were fast runners. Let a man bring a fast quarter-horse to that part of the Montana cow country and he had no trouble at all matching a horse race. Sam was usually the one to match the race. He had a habit of laying back until the man got to bragging and laid the cash money on the line to back his talk.

Luke Deniff had the wiry build of a jockey. Lean, hatchet-faced, with a hidden light behind the cold gray of his eyes. There were some who claimed Luke was the shrewdest gambler of the three brothers. Luke was marked by a peculiar habit, a sort of nervous laugh. A meaningless laugh that had the sound of a brittle cackle.

The laugh would come forth when there was no need for it—in some poker game where the stakes were high, with a big jackpot in the middle of the poker table. Luke would throw one or two or three cards into the discard in draw poker. When he picked up the cards to fill his hand, his eyes would pucker, and the cackling laugh would come out. I've seen seasoned gamblers give a sudden start. If they were strangers, sitting for the first time in a game where Luke had a chair, they would give him a look and figure he was either drunk or crazy. Gamblers who knew Luke and had played poker with him a lot of times, could never figure out that meaningless, brittle, cackling laugh that came with startling abruptness, then was chopped off on a high note. Luke could have filled his hand, or he could have missed. When it came Luke's turn to bet, when he shoved in a stack of yellows, nobody on earth, even his own brothers, ever knew if he held high cards or was bluffing.

And far, far into the night when dawn was graying the outside streets, that laugh of Luke Deniff had frayed other gamblers' nerves. More than one good card player often remarked that he would have cheerfully cut Luke's throat before the game broke up and Luke quit the big winner.

That laugh was Luke's stock in the gambling trade. It was his hole-card and no man could read it. He told me one time that he had practiced the laugh until he had it perfected. He timed it accurately, to the split second, when a player was undecided whether to lay down his hand or call.

I was a long way from our home range in Montana one time, staying at a hotel in an Arizona cow town. There came a knock on the door sometime around midnight. I opened the door and there stood Luke Deniff. His laugh greeted me. I had not seen Luke in ten-twelve years, didn't know he was in that part of the country.

"The local boys took me for all I had on me. I'm a stranger here. I got to get a check cashed for a thousand dollars right away. I found out you were here and woke you outa your beauty sleep."

He had the check made out to me and I went downstairs and the night clerk dug up the money. Luke went out and down the street.

He woke me up about sunrise. I had a bottle in my room and when he had hoisted a quick one for an eye opener, Luke began pulling wads of money out of his pockets and tossing bunches of green and yellow backs on the bed. He had run that thousand up into about fifteen thousand bucks. He had taken the local boys to the cleaners. He told me to count it into two piles. For me to keep half of his winnings. When I refused he didn't try to argue.

"You grubstaked me, Walt. How in hell did you know if I had a dime in that bank?"

I didn't. I still don't know. I went downstairs with Luke. He gave the clerk a thousand dollars in cash and redeemed the check. He touched a match to it and we watched it burn.

"I'm pullin' out now," he said. "Some of the local tinhorns look like bad losers. Thanks and so-long." Luke laughed as he went out the door.

If Luke Deniff is still alive, he'll disappoint me if he does not laugh that brittle meaningless cackle when it comes his time to cash in. The laugh will come from the thin-lipped poker face, without a shadow of fear in his gambler's eyes.

PORKY DENIFF was inclined to pauchiness. Heavy set, moon faced. There was a good-natured guileless look about him, and you took him for just another easy going fat man. Until you

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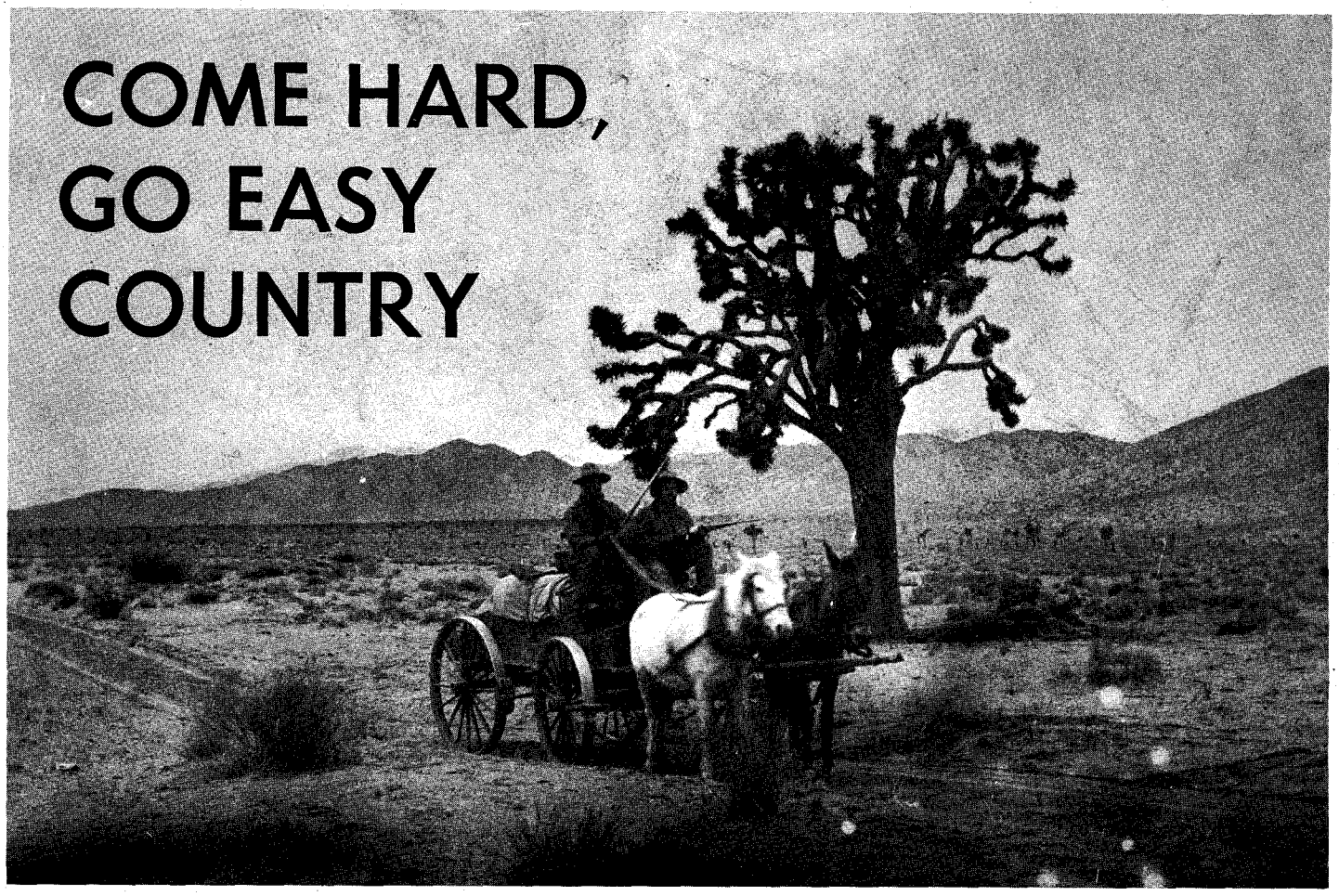
COME HARD, GO EASY COUNTRY



Courtesy Author

Wagon travel along this road was pretty miserable in cold weather. In the picture above are Johnny Lang, discoverer of Lost Horse Mine, and William Hansen who installed the water system to the mine.

WHEN I WAS a kid of sixteen, I always liked to be around horses. I was helping Old Man Roach grease his wagon when he said, "Johnnie, how would you like to go with me out on the desert around Twentynine Palms country and help do assessment work on some mining property that my son Will owns? I can get you a dollar a day and grub." Boy, a buck a day and chow—that sounded OK by me.

We spent a few days getting everything in order, loading two fifty-gallon barrels for water that we were to get at Twentynine Palms, canvas and hoops to be put on top of the barrels after we filled them, our grub packed in boxes, extra horseshoes and nails, five gallons of coal oil, etc. On the morning of the 18th of December, 1911, we were on our way.

Our starting point was just east of Los Angeles' city limits. As the sun was breaking in the east we were going through Coyote Pass plugging along at three or four miles per hour.

The third night about seven o'clock we pulled into Banning and stopped at an old campground right in town. Little campfires greeted us, and we soon had our own going. The smell of bacon, coffee, fried spuds and onions filled the air. We were tired as we had had to tie the lines back and walk behind the wagon for the last few miles holding onto the tailgate to warm us. At that time of the year there was plenty of snow on San Jacinto to our right and old Grey Back to our left.

Mr. Roach bought a gallon of grape brandy at the winery as we pulled through Cucamónga. He took a couple of snorts on the jug and offered it to me, but I didn't drink any of it as I was still a little kid, always too small for my age. But I sure did my share of eating. Nothing tastes so good as coffee and food cooked over a campfire, especially if you were so hungry you could chew on leather.

Camped around us were a few old prospectors with their burros. I visited a couple of their camps before turning in. Mr. Roach and I had our bedrolls under the wagon and when I stretched out my blankets and pulled the tarp up on them, I lay a few minutes listening to the murmur of voices and the stomping of stock in the corrals. Soon I drifted off into dreamland and even Old Man Roach's snoring didn't faze me. Seems like I had hardly slept an hour when the camp was astir, fires kindled, horses and burros kicking. Then the faint light in the east and the well-known dawn was on us again.

I never could figure out why those old-timers got up so early as most of them were not going anywhere, just waiting around and trying to get someone to grubstake them. Each of them had a few little nuggets in a small glass container or a couple of pieces of rich ore quartz. They were all about to make a big strike if only they could find a partner to grubstake them.

Well, it was a good old life, at that. One could camp along the road and shoot a cottontail or a few quail, if they crossed the road and plenty of them did; make a fire whenever you wanted to without the law riding up and asking what you were doing, or if you had a fire permit.

At breakfast Mr. Roach broke the news to me that we were to pick up a prospect there at Banning that his son Will wanted to show some mining property to. For me to clean up camp and get ready to pull out, while he went over to the hotel to see if this man had come in on the night train. In a short time he came back and told me that his man had come in all right, but we would have to hold up as he had come in pretty well organized and was carrying quite a load. Said he left him in the dining room filling up on black coffee. So we didn't pull out until 2:30 in the afternoon.

WELL, our new companion proved to be quite a character. He and Mr. Roach became quite chummy before we got underway. Of course, the mere fact that our new friend had a suitcase full of bonded whiskey might have had something to do with it. By the time we reached White Water Creek, jolting over the rough road and getting out and rolling big rocks out of the way, it was getting dark and cold. A freezing wind blew up the valley, but Mr. Roach and his new friend didn't seem to mind it as long as I took care of the stock, rustled up the wood and made a fire, went down to the creek and brought up a pail of water and cooked supper.

They both sat on their bedrolls with

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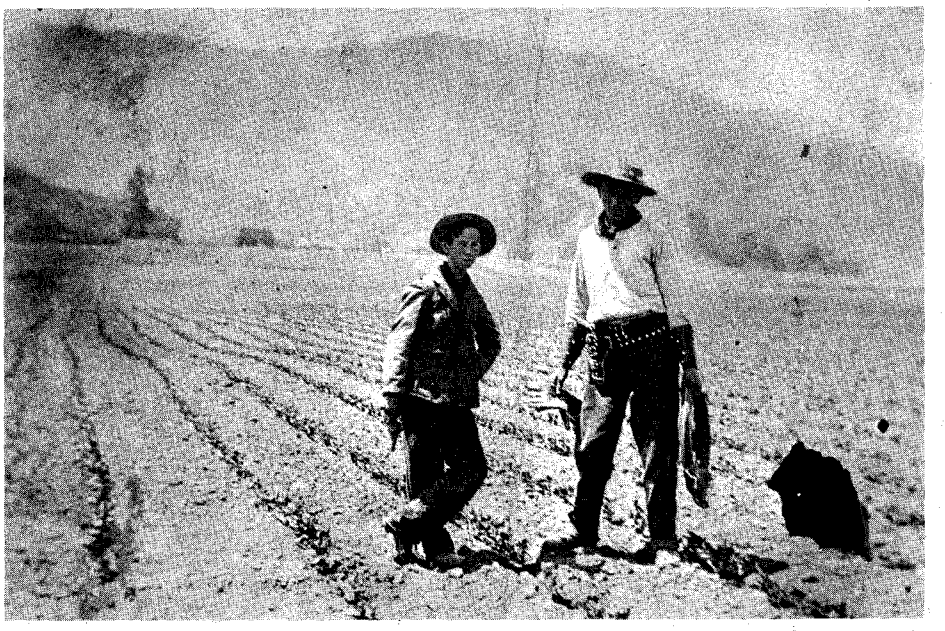
By J. E. TOMPKINS

A sixteen-year-old kid who'd been left stranded on the desert to rustle for himself meets up with Chuckawalla Wilson and Billy Keys



Courtesy Author

The author is shown at left above. This picture was made when he was fourteen-and-a-half, about eighteen months before his trip into the desert country. The friend is Charlie Bacon from Dallas.

a blanket around them like a couple of Indian chiefs, but instead of passing the peace pipe they passed the bottle back and forth, lowering it about three fingers. After I cleaned the dishes at the creek in ice water and sand, I had just about had it. I helped the old boys get their beds straightened out, put a blanket over each horse as it was real cold and getting colder by the minute, and the pay-off was I only had on thin clothes that I had worn in town. I didn't know what I was getting into but I soon learned. Next morning when I woke up, the old gents were buried down deep in their blankets. Not even the top of their heads showed. They slept under the wagon and I had to sleep out with just the stars over me. My tarpaulin was covered with frost but I soon had a warm fire going, took the horses down to the creek for a drink, and saw they had a feed of rolled barley and a flake of hay. The smell of coffee and frying bacon brought the old boys from the land of make-believe to the cold world of reality.

Mr. Roach stuck his head out first, gave a sigh and pulled his head back under the covers. Then the pigeon poked his head up and looked out with a sickly grin. He nodded to me but it was easy to see he was wondering why he had left his warm hotel room for this. He soon had enough strength left to point to his suitcase and I knew what he wanted. So I got a new quart, pulled the cork and he had a real eye-opener. I went over to Roach and gave him his morning nip. Then with breakfast under our belts, we bade goodbye to White Water Creek, and pulled up the small grade across what was called Devil's Garden.

We hit it part-way. When the east wind started blowing, pretty soon we were in a real desert sandstorm. Dry dead cactus flew by us. Lucky we weren't hit. We tied tarpaulin over the wagon load, tied back the lines and walked behind the wagon holding on to the tailgate and trying to hold a piece of canvas over our heads. Around eleven o'clock we reached what Mr. Roach called the Lone Pine. I guess it was a piñon, the only pine for many a mile. We tried to make a fire and cook a little bacon by tying a canvas to the front and back wheels on the east side of the wagon. Then we dug a hole in the sand to make a fire pit. We finally got the bacon cooked but it was so gritty with sand we could hardly eat it. So off we started and around dusk that evening we pulled into Warren's Ranch and saw the only people we had run across since we left White Water Creek.

At Warren's Ranch (I am not sure if that is the way they spelled it) we had a good supper for only twenty-five cents each and we could sleep in the barn. That sounded good to me. We sat around the ranch house and talked until about eight o'clock. There was a man there who was sure a railroad was going to be built through the valley. He had a homestead and said he was going to donate a piece of land for the railroad station and a piece of ground for the church, etc. (But the railroad never came; I later found that the desert is full of dreams that never come true.)

WE WERE real tired and soon had our bedrolls laid out on the hay. It was too cold to take our clothes off but we had to remove our boots. As we lay there, the moon came over the ridge bright as day. Mr. Roach said, "I believe we should rest for an hour or so and go on a few miles farther as we have quite a-ways to go." So we were soon on our way again with the ice cold wind a-blowing.

We didn't go but a few miles until Mr. Roach said we would stop for the rest of the night. Here we had left a warm barn to sleep out in the freezing open. I unhitched the horses and put a blanket on them. We built a large fire out of brush. On one side of the fire the wind blew flames so far you would get burned; on the other side of the fire you would freeze with the wind blowing on your back. Well, it was time to pass the bottle back and forth again, but even whiskey can't keep the cold out. Pretty soon we all agreed that it was better to be walking than freezing.

So, for the second time that night, I hooked the team up and we were on our way, up the long grade of Morongo Valley. There is a good paved road along there today, and it is hard to believe what a miserable trip it was with a wagon, slow team and walking in the sand and dust at about three cold miles an hour.

Mr. Roach told me to cheer up as we would soon be in Percyville just over the next rise in the road. There we would stay where it was warm for the rest of the night, a thought which brought new hope to my chilled bones. I could visualize sleeping in a warm house or at least a barn.

When we got to the top of the grade all I could see in the valley below were Joshua trees, their ghostly arms waving in the moonlight. In about a half-hour we pulled into Percyville which was comprised of three dilapidated tents that the wind had torn to threads, not a piece of canvas a yard wide intact. I was learning about the desert fast. We got a hammer and crowbar out of the wagon and started by moonlight to tear down one tent, as each of them had four 1'x12' boards from the floor up. We took four of the boards from one tent and nailed on one side of another tent so the horses could be protected from the cold wind. Then we made a bed inside. It was a long way from being the Palace Hotel, but tired as we were who cared? As soon as we hit the sack we were asleep and didn't wake next morning until the sun was 'way up.

There was a water trough and well nearby and after cooking breakfast we took our good old time eating and talking. Mr. Roach was concerned about what became of Percy. He said he hadn't been over this road for years. According to Mr. Roach, the last time he was by, Percy had T. B. and was trying to start a little place here where such patients could recuperate. But it looked as if T. B. got Percy before he could get started.

We didn't leave until about nine o'clock that morning as we wanted to make the old adobe at Twentynine Palms for the night. On our way, Mr. Roach explained the landmarks to our companion and me.

"Right over there," he said, pointing to the right, "is Coyote Holes, where the coyotes dig for water under a spring that dries up in the summer." Then he pointed out a large rock he called Turtle Rock and it sure did look like one. As we rode along, he related the story of Willie Boy who had killed some of the Indians at Twentynine Palms, and pointed out the butte where Willie Boy used his last shells to kill himself rather than be taken to prison.

Late that afternoon we arrived at Twentynine Palms. We passed by three

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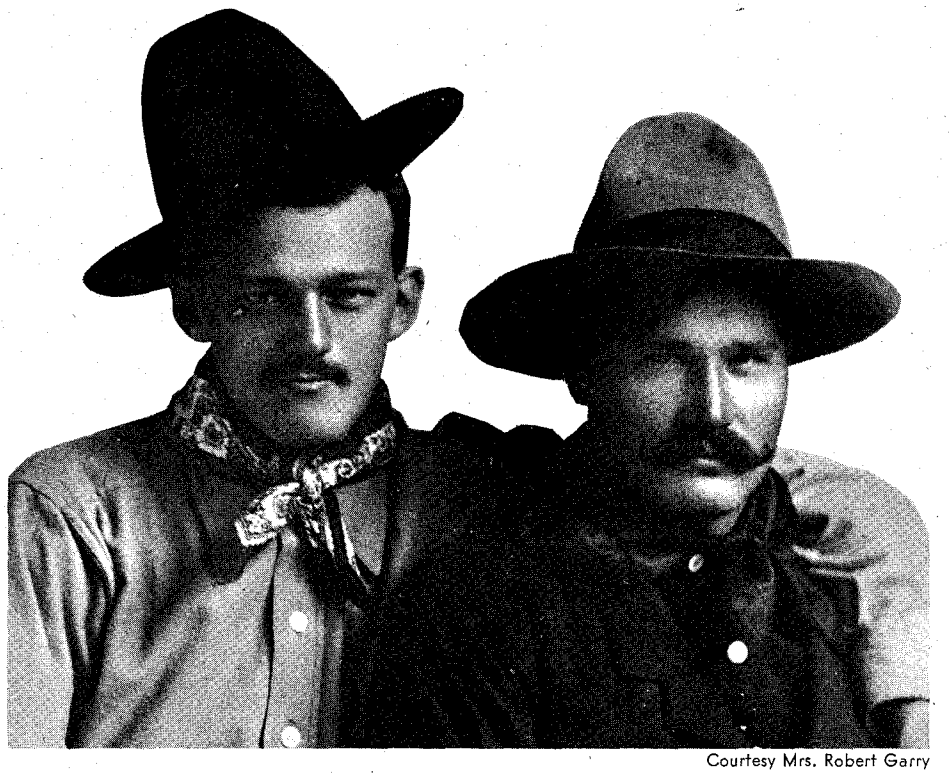

Courtesy Mrs. Robert Garry

Billy Keys, above right, photographed with an unidentified friend about 1906

little willow Indian hogans, but no Indians were in sight. Passed Chuckawalla Wilson's dugout, an old-time prospector and early Californian. Part of his shack was in a dugout under a large palm, then a room extended out from the bank made of odds and ends of planks, tin, etc. Off to the left in a little meadow was a small 1'x12' board and batten cabin where an old Indian and his wife lived. Those three were the only residents of Twentynine Palms at that time, at least they were the only ones that I saw. No signs of others. We pulled up at the little one-room adobe. I took care of the stock while my two companions put food and bedding in the adobe. There was a barb wire corral and a lean-to for shelter for our team.

AN OLD prospector was there ahead of us. He had five of the best burros I had ever seen in the corral and an all-round good pack outfit piled in the corner of the adobe. Never knew what his name was—never asked him.

This old boy seemed to want to be alone, so we didn't bother him. Before dark I heard him out talking to his burros; one he called Nell and he had quite a talk with her. We made supper in the open fireplace. It sure seemed cheerful to be able to spread our blankets out on the floor.

Mr. Roach said, "Johnnie, you like to meet old-timers. Why not call on Chuckawalla Wilson? He lives in that old dugout we passed under the Palms. He'd be glad to have someone to talk to."

So I put my little thirty-two pearl-handled pistol in my back pocket and started over. The night was beautiful, the moon was bright as day. A soft breeze whispered through the sage and rustled the tall palm fans. Off in the distance the coyotes were having a powwow. As I neared Wilson's place I could see little rays of light showing through the cracks in the walls and the smell of sage roots burning in his stove. When I got about a hundred feet from his dugout I called out a couple of times.

On the second call the old man said, "Come in, I know you are out there. Old Sniff here has been a-growling."

Well, I went on in, met the old gent and told him that we had pulled in that afternoon.

"Yes," he replied. "I seed you when you people passed. Who was with you? My eyes ain't so good no more, but it shore looked like old Bill Roach."

"That was him," I said, "and the other fellow came along for the ride."

Well, how can I describe Wilson? He seemed very old, and must have been a fair-sized man in his day. He sat by the stove in his long union-suit, nothing else, not even slippers. Sitting there in a easy chair he probably made himself, a few boxes sitting around for chairs, a bunk by one wall, only a few feet from the stove—that was it.

Wilson weighed about 160 pounds, a little flabby looking, hair unkept, a week's stubble on his face. But a real pleasant face, as though he didn't have a care in the world. What he and his dog lived on I didn't know, as his cupboard seemed pretty bare. Mr. Roach told me later that he lived on chuckawalla, which was how he got his nickname.

"Well, sit down, boy, and tell me who you are and tell me what's going on where you come from."

I told him that I had made my own way around for the last few years since I was twelve years old. I happened to mention I had worked some in Ventura County. When he heard that, he sat back and told me of his experience looking for the Lost Padre Silver Mine in the mountains back of Ventura. How he got General Fremont to supply him with ten soldiers from his cavalry and pack outfits to look for the mine when Fremont passed through Ventura, then known as San Buena Ventura. He had two weeks to find the mine. It was a long and very interesting story and, checking the dates, I am sure he was telling the truth. Of course, he never found the mine.

Well, we sat there until three o'clock in the morning. Then I told him goodbye and walked back to the adobe. I slipped up easy to the door so as not to awaken the men. The breeze was blowing a little stronger and the galvanized roof rattled. Three different snores in three different keys greeted me as I slipped quietly into my blankets.

In the morning we awoke to a beautiful day. I noticed the old prospector was gone and all his gear. I guess the place was getting too crowded for him. I looked out the window and he was packing the burros. After a good breakfast we dipped the water out of the well and filled the two barrels and our canteens. Soon we were on the last lap of our journey. We only had about nine miles to go to reach the Gold Park Consolidated Mine holdings. That's the place we would call home for a few days. No one, I suppose, had used this road since the last assessment work was done, as the mines had been closed down for some time and the road for the most part went right up the dry wash.

ABOUT ELEVEN in the morning we passed our first building, a big deserted bunkhouse. As we drew up to it, the front door swung lazily open. It kinda startled me as I expected to see someone standing there. But it was only the wind that opened it, or was it? I had a strange feeling that departed miners were looking over each other's shoulders and wondering who we were and why we were disturbing their solitude.

Next we came to the combined dining room and cook house. This was to be our headquarters during our stay. In the dining room we set up camp and I put the team in the corral where they could get in and out of the barn. Besides the two buildings mentioned, there was a guest house across the draw, also the assayer's office, blacksmith shop, and up the canyon the powderhouse. We found some folding cots in one corner of the cook house and put them up in the dining room. This room had one long table and benches on each side and could set about twenty men at one time.

We soon had everything in order. I rustled up a lot of wood. Mr. Roach was a good cook and I watched how he went about making different tasty dishes with the limited supplies he had to work with. Rice pudding was one of his specialities. As this was Christmas Eve we also had canned peaches for dessert and, of course, the Yuletide "good cheer" followed on Christmas Day.

We did a little work on the road. Then about dusk Mr. Roach's son, Will, showed up with a companion, a buckboard and team he had rented at the livery stable in Banning. Will and his friend took over the guest house. The following morning we got up early as we were going over to the Desert Queen Mine to visit Billy Keys and to borrow a burro from him for me to ride putting up location notices on a group of claims.

Will and his companion rode the buckboard; Mr. Roach, our friend and myself took our wagon, winding around the large rocks in what is now part of Joshua National Park. In a few miles we swung to the right up a long stretch of road and finally stopped at Keys' cabin.

Billy heard us coming and came out to meet us. After an introduction he invited us inside where everything was in

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shipshape order. The walls were covered with pictures from magazines which showed that Billy had plenty of time on his hands. Well, Bill was a real host, said he was going to make us a real desert meal and he surely did, including sourdough biscuits. Later I felt we should have brought some grub with us. We had just come from Banning and that was the closest place to buy anything, about two days' ride each way. But if we had, Bill might have been offended.

We spent a lovely day in the pretty surroundings with a fine host. Towards afternoon the folks bade Bill goodbye and thanked him for the fine meal. Bill told me to wait and we would call in the burros a little later in the afternoon. He just let them run wild. To keep them around at night he always fed them a little rolled barley each evening. Bill was a fine looking man. He wore his hair long and it was jet black; he had a black Stetson hat and carried a long barrel peacemaker on his hip. Mr. Roach told me Bill was a crack shot with either sixgun or rifle and I could really believe him. Said one time he saw Bill jump a jackrabbit and let it get a good start. Then with lightning speed he drew and, in one shot, dropped the rabbit. That's good shooting.

We sat in front of his cabin and shot the breeze until late that afternoon. The burros came slowly up the canyon. When they got near, Bill brought out a can of barley and fed each one a big double-handful, then we slipped a rope on the one I was to ride back to our camp. Keys put on a hackamore and led the burro to the head of a steep draw, showed me the trail, and told me not to try and guide her, just let her have her way. Said she would get back to camp.

The others had left earlier in the afternoon since they had the long way by road to go, but the burro and I only had to make the valley floor from Bill's down and over a small range of mountains to drop down into camp. But it was farther than it first seemed. Distance in the desert can be deceiving.

I THOUGHT I would be in camp before dark, but as I started up the last ridge separating the valley from camp and by the time my burro picked its way around the sticky yuccas and cactus, it was black as ink. The moon wouldn't be up until later. Way down in the dark valley below, a tiny light showed so I knew we were on the right way to camp. Mr. Roach had hung a lantern out so I could see it from the ridge above and, believe me, that little light surely looked good to me, made me feel like I was coming home. I was getting real cold. It wasn't long before we rode into camp. Mr. Roach said he was getting worried that I had lost my way and this was no night to be out.

I put my little friend, the burro, in the corral and gave him a good feed of barley and hay, then went in for a warm supper. Bill, Jr. gave me a slap on the back and said I'd do to ride the trail with. It made me feel real proud. I told him it was the burro that got me over the mountains in the dark; I didn't do a thing but sit there and ride.

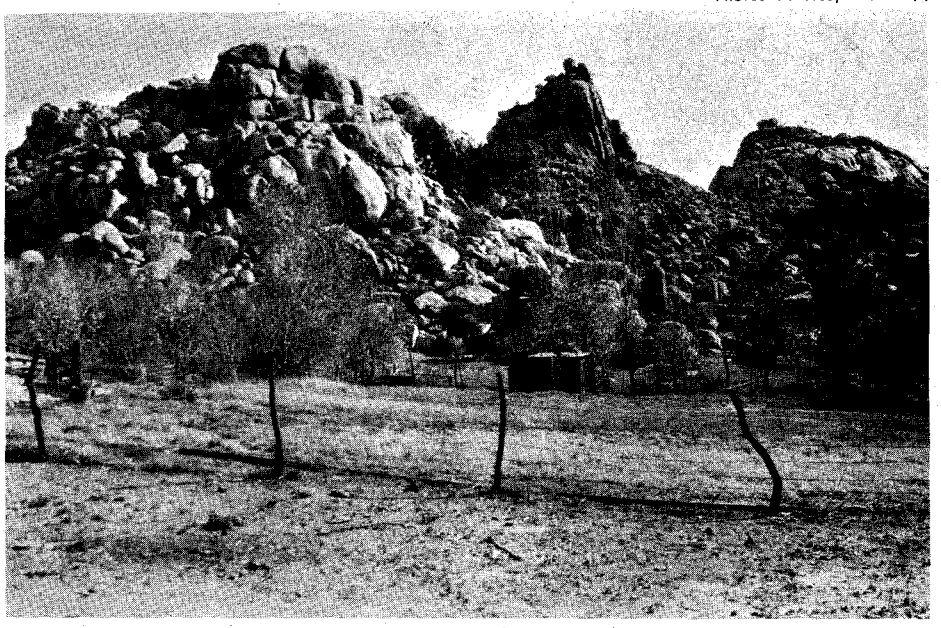
Next morning Roach, Jr. and the man we picked up at Banning took off in the buckboard to see some mining property over by the Dale Mining District. Said they would be gone all day.

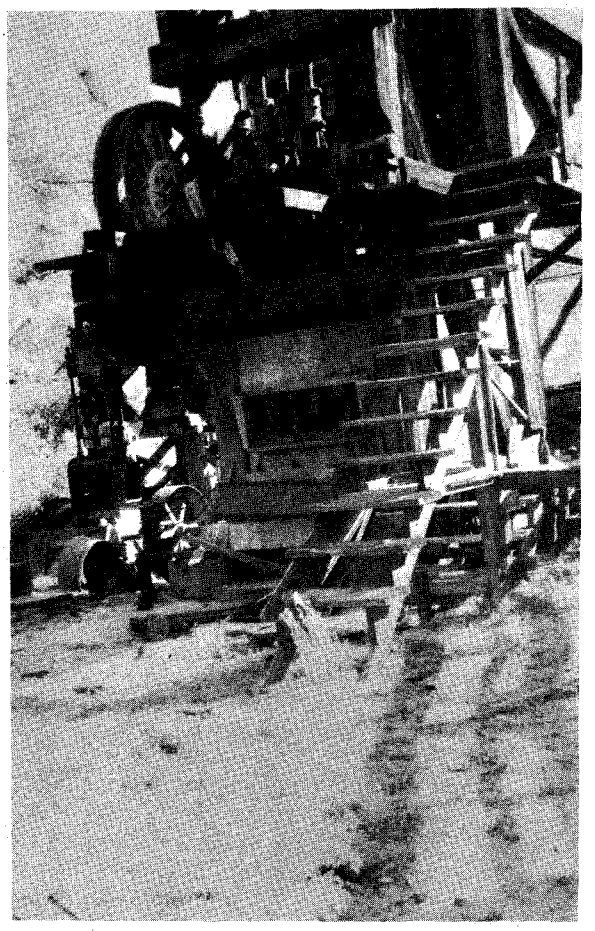
I took my map of the claims I was to exchange location notices on. In fact, we were jumping our own claims. I had to locate the center monuments, take the location notice out and put in new ones under a different name. That way we only had to do assessment work on one of the claims.

When the buildings were located, after riding all day from claim to claim I welcomed the site of camp. Bill, Jr. and his prospect hadn't come back yet and it was after dark before they pulled into camp. I guess he didn't get his prospect to commit himself on the mining property. He and his Dad talked out by the corral for quite awhile before coming to supper.

After we ate and had cleaned up the dishes, we sat around the kitchen stove. Bill, Jr. spoke up and said, "Johnnie, would you be afraid to stay here on the claim for ten days alone? We must all get back and tend to things in the city. We would like to leave tomorrow morning, the first of January, and someone should stay here and work on the roads a little to make a showing and you have the rest of the notices to put up."

Photos Courtesy Russ Pegg





The old stamp mill for the Desert Queen and Lost Horse Mines is shown above. At left, Keys house nestled at the foot of a rocky mountain.

I thought a few minutes before I gave him my answer. I thought here I am, nine miles from water and the closest people I know of are across the range and valley to Bill Keys, or back to Twentynine Palms to old Wilson who would be of no help if I got sick or hurt. But I thrilled at the idea of having to hold down a gold claim and being on my own so I said, "I am not afraid, only it's going to be ten lonesome days. But I'll stay."

That seemed to relieve everyone. Bill, Jr. said they would leave me all the food they had, only take enough for all to have lunch for that day. They would stop at Warren's Ranch and eat and put up for the night and the next evening they would be in Banning.

Next morning we were all up by daylight. We had a large box of crackers and big chunk of cheese. They made up a lunch of cheese and crackers. The balance we left on the dining room table. I rode my burro down with them as far as Twentynine Palms and filled two large containers of water from the well. I told them all goodbye and started on the long nine-mile journey back to camp, not seeing a living soul on the way. At that time there were very few people in that part of the desert, for the mines had played out and so had the people.

At one time there was quite a bit of activity around Twentynine Palms. A stamp mill was there where the ore

(Continued on page 60)

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Jack

Jack Morrow (wearing light hat—seated on barrel) at Benton, Wyoming Territory—1868

By NINA HULL MILLER

The first story of any scope about a character of the Union Pacific construction period named Jack Morrow, came out in a book, *Shutters West*, published in December, 1962. Published for the first time, in *Shutters West*, were two photographs of Morrow taken in 1868 by pioneer photographer Arundel C. Hull. These two pictures are reproduced here, with a more detailed story of this colorful rogue and swindler through cooperation of the author of the book, Nina Hull Miller, and the publisher, Sage Books (Alan Swallow).

EXACTLY when John A. (Jack) Morrow appeared on the Plains has not been established, but by the late 1850s he was well known as a government teamster, hauling freight out of Omaha to Denver, Salt Lake City and the gold camps of Colorado Territory. At times his loads included mail for military posts, especially Fort Laramie. Long before the railroad came, Jack's drunken sprees and fantastic success at poker furnished subjects for tale-swapping among the freighters.

There is some indication that Morrow came from a substantial family but as a black sheep had been cut off, or had cut himself off, from family ties when he set out for the West. He probably had some education, he certainly had more intelligence than the usual run of frontier sharps and, had it not been for his indulgences, he doubtlessly could have made a mark for himself.

Probably broke when he arrived on the frontier, Morrow became involved in a common form of thievery to begin his long career of questionable activities. Through it all, however, he managed to avoid the type of scrape which would have gotten him strung to the nearest tree, and he ended up a big-contract swindler. Unlike some of the frontier characters who lived down their reputations and became solid citizens, Morrow, although he became a wealthy man with a guarded sort of respect from his associates, remained a cheat and a swindler until he died.

One of Jack's contemporaries said he had the appearance of a cavalier when he was riding his favorite thoroughbred, but he was as ruthless toward animals as he was toward humans who thwarted him—a hard rider and a hard driver. He once dared anyone to equal his feat of driving a team of Indian ponies—100 miles in one day.

Such men are typically vain. As soon as Jack began to prosper he acquired, perhaps in a poker game, a huge diamond shirt stud. He wore it constantly, high up where it would show above a buttoned-up coat. The stud can be seen in both of photographer Hull's pictures. Before the Chinese laundrymen came in the wake of the railroad, the shirt with the enormous stud was often grimy.

Although he was recognized as a boaster and a braggart, it was nevertheless considered a bad idea to question this quick-tempered man's tall tales, because he let it be known that he had killed a man named Murphy in a gunfight. In his book, *Pioneer Heroes and Heroines*, Frank Triplett said of him: "Jack's bravery was of a doubtful stamp and among fighting men he was regarded more as a bluffer than as a truly brave man." If this is true, his bluffing stood him in good stead for many years.

Another contemporary described Jack as a very social man, given to impulsive generosity.

DURING the time Jack worked as a government teamster hauling freight west from Omaha, he accumulated a stake by tapping his freight. In other words, he helped himself to items from his loads and cached them at points along his route, to be picked up when convenient. When he had acquired enough capital in this way he went into partnership with a Frenchman named Alex Constant.

For many years "Old Constant" had been working along the Missouri River for the American Fur Company, trapping and bartering for furs with the Indians and other white trappers. Now, with Morrow, he set up a trading post on the Platte at Doby Town, near Fort Kearney, Nebraska Territory. Constant's years of experience with dubious characters he had dealt with on the frontier should have made him more careful, but in 1860 he was robbed by the wily Morrow, who fled westward to the juncture of the North and South Platte Rivers.

There, in the same year that the Pony Express was started, Morrow established his famous Junction Ranch at the fork of the two Plattes. The Boxelder Mail and Pony Express Station was also built that year, a little farther west. Cottonwood Springs to the east and O'Fallon's Bluff to the west, were road ranches which had already become famous, having

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Morrow—ROAD RANCHER

— — and heaven help the pilgrims!

served many thousands of west-bound travelers for two years.

Morrow knew this country well and saw its potential as fine grazing land. The site he chose was a few miles southeast of the present city of North Platte, Nebraska, and the level farming area on the tableland is still called Morrow Flats.

The ranch house at Junction Ranch was one of the sights of anyone's journey west. Dugouts, soddies and sod-roofed cabins were the types of habitation travelers were accustomed to seeing along the trail. Then suddenly they were astonished to find a huge house, two-and-a-half stories high, sixty feet long, built of squared cedar logs. It stood on the open prairie south of the river fork. Close beside the trail stood the small, original ranch building of rough cedar logs, and across from it a sturdy corral built of cedar posts like a stockade. All emigrant trains, freight trains and other traffic, had to pass between these two structures.

Morrow's quickly became an outstanding road ranch as far as having a large stock of provisions and merchandise were concerned, yet soon after it started operation, emigrants began to meet with a variety of misfortunes when they reached its vicinity. Word was passed back along the trail that Jack Morrow was stocking his ranch with the help of "bad" Indians and renegade white men, but when travelers heard the stories and tried to by-pass Junction Ranch they found it impossible to avoid going through his layout. It was the only way to avoid a deep, wide ditch with a high diked bank that Jack had dug across the old traveled route paralleling the river.

This strategic spot for his ranch buildings had been purposely chosen. Close to the south began the steep bluffs and deep canyons that edge that side of the Platte Valley, making it impassable for wagons. To the north was a half mile of open prairie where the old trail ran alongside the riverbank. Across this natural trailway he dug his ditch. It was a simple but very real barricade. Heavy ox-drawn or horse-drawn wagons could not get across. The ditch can still be seen today, nearly filled and sodded over.

IN A CAMP near the ranch were several hundred Sioux, with their squaws and papooses, who were kept supplied with rations, sundries and liquor by Jack Morrow. Also supported in the primitive comfort of this camp were four white squawmen who could speak Sioux: by name, Sharp, Randell, Rowland and Turgeon. Red men and white returned Morrow's purposeful generosity by stampeding the stock of the emigrants and running the herds into the hills at his direction.

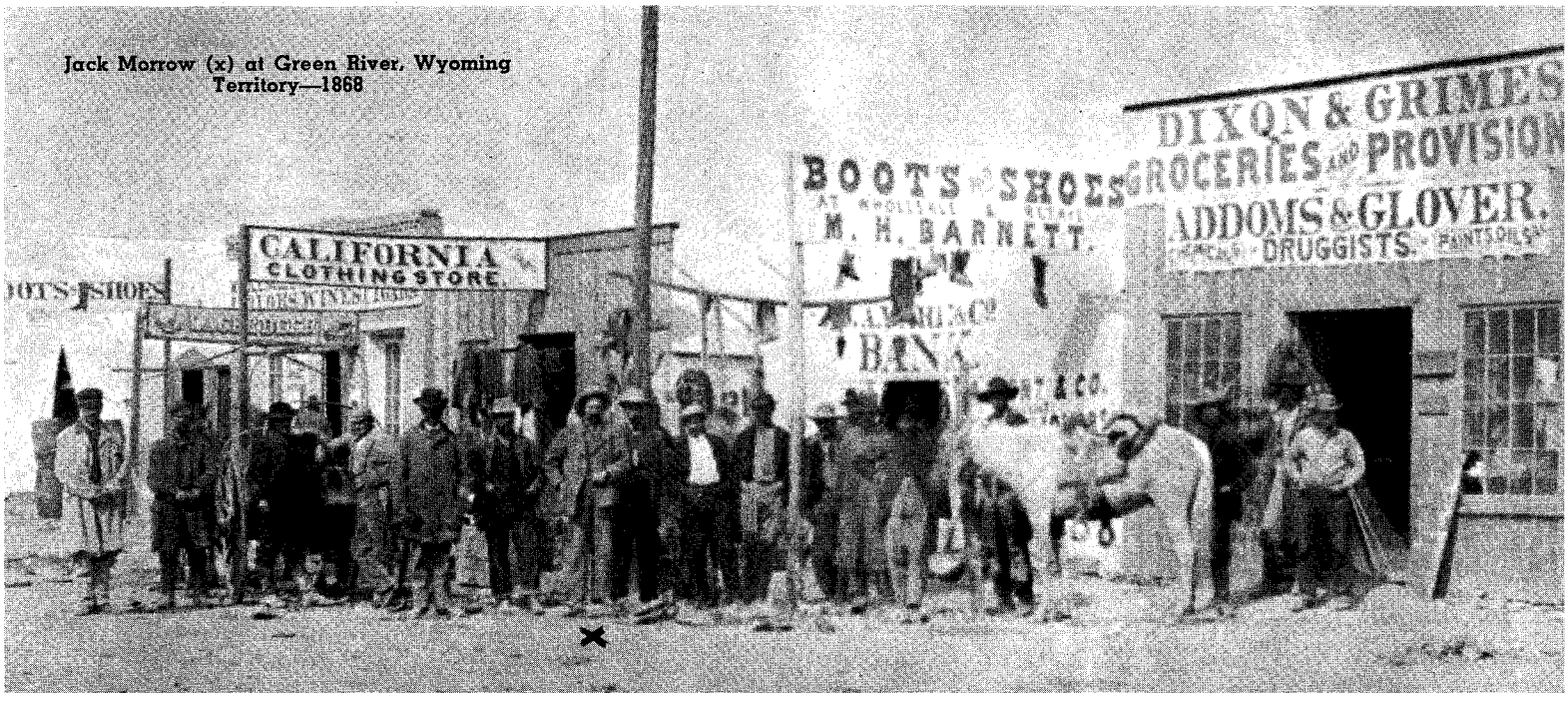
For miles along the south side of the Platte the maze of bluffs and canyons made ideal hiding places for stolen cattle and horses. One high bluff a few miles from Junction Ranch, visible for many miles, had been an Indian lookout and signal station for many, many years before the white men came. Morrow's factotums kept watch there around the clock, reporting to him the size, character and vulnerability of each wagontrain before it ever reached the ranch. Sioux Lookout is now marked by a limestone statue of a Sioux scout, looking out over the wide, green valley.

If the emigrants were aware of the dangers of this part of their journey, they took what precautions they could against losing their stock to Morrow's raiders. Few succeeded in passing through the ranch without the loss of part or all of their animals. When cattle or horses had been run off into the canyons it was folly for the owners to go in pursuit. The new acquisitions were rounded up and turned in with the growing herds on Jack's sandhills range.

If losses were reported to Morrow he was sympathetic and always offered to sell replacements as a special favor. In fact, this was a very good way to find out if the stranger were carrying much money. Offers to have someone search for the stock for a certain sum had the same motive. Animals were never returned under any circumstances, and the traveler who gave any indication that he had a substantial amount of money risked being robbed after he left Junction Ranch.

Sales from Morrow's large stock of merchandise and provisions brought him a legitimate income, although prices were often unscrupulously high. The ranch store was, like all the road ranches, a great convenience to needy travelers, and those who were lucky enough to escape trouble spoke highly of Junction Ranch. From his home-ranch headquarters Morrow carried on a variety of other successful enterprises, all

(Continued on page 44)



Jack Morrow (x) at Green River, Wyoming Territory—1868

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Buck Jones

BONA FIDE HERO

By JOSEPH G. ROSA

Photos Courtesy Author

Buck Jones with his ornately engraved Colt Peacemaker. Enlargement of the gun (inset) is through courtesy *Guns & Ammo Magazine*, October, 1959, Peterson Publishing Company.

Author's Note: Most legendary heroes of the Old West were part fact, part fiction, and the movie cowboys were rarely as authentic as their Old West counterparts. But as I was to learn when I started digging into the legend of Buck Jones, his publicity was based on fact. I was able to confirm important details with his wife, Odille, who still resides in Hollywood, and the National Archives in Washington contributed information on his army career.

"KING OF THE COWBOYS"—about a dozen Western movie stars have borne that title since 1903 but, in my opinion, only three really stand out—William S. Hart, Tom Mix and Buck Jones.

Of this trio only Buck Jones was an authentic cowboy. Hart was a Broadway actor of some considerable fame before he entered motion pictures in 1914, but he had never been a real cowboy. Tom Mix, on the other hand, had had some rodeo experience and knew something of the business, but he was not as authentic as his later press publicity made out. Buck Jones, however, had been a cowboy and a cavalryman when the Old West was still alive.

Perhaps his name may not mean much to this generation, yet there was a time when practically every boy in the United States would rather have been Buck Jones than President. His action-packed, full-of-excitement Westerns appealed to youngsters and adults alike. Even cowboys liked his pictures and a Buck Jones feature was sure to draw many off the range on a Saturday night. To millions of fans he was the most beloved of the heroes of gunsmoke and gallop.

Born Charles Frederick Gebhard (sometimes spelled Gebhart) on December 12, 1891, at Vincennes, Indiana, he was only a few months old when his father purchased a 3,000-acre ranch at Red Rock, Oklahoma. Young Charlie Gebhard learned fast. As soon as he was able to walk unaided he was to be found toddling toward the nearest corral where friendly cowboys encouraged him to sit a pony. It was not long before he was able to ride, and cowhands began referring to him as a real "buckaroo" which name was soon shortened to "Buck." It was a name he was proud to claim for the remainder of his life.

By his fifteenth birthday wanderlust had seized the boy and he decided to see more of the great Western country before it became fenced in. At that time the best way to do it was to join the Army.

"But he was too young and could only join with his mother's permission," Mrs. Jones told me. "Together they went and lied about his age so he could join."

Buck's mother realized that to refuse permission would only delay the event, so she agreed to the deception. At Columbus Barracks, Ohio, on January 8, 1907, Buck enlisted in Troop G, Sixth U. S. Cavalry, and gave his date of birth as December 12, 1888. This date and that of December 4, 1889 appear in most reference books.

After his initial recruit training, Trooper Gebhard saw some service along the Mexican border. On one patrol he narrowly missed death in a thunderstorm when lightning struck a steel bridge he was crossing. Several troopers riding ahead of him were killed. Later Troop G was ordered to the Philippines, setting sail on September 7, 1907 and arriving on October 9. For the next two years they fought Moro bandits, and in a jungle battle toward the end of 1909 Buck was badly wounded in the right leg just above the knee. He was threatened with the loss of his leg, but recovered to carry a 6½-inch scar for the remainder of his life.

According to army records, Buck left the Philippines on November 15, 1909 and arrived back in the United States on December 14 where he was honorably discharged at the Recruit Depot, Fort McDowell, California, on December 20 "by reason of short remaining term, for the convenience of the government."

His leg was still troubling him and he

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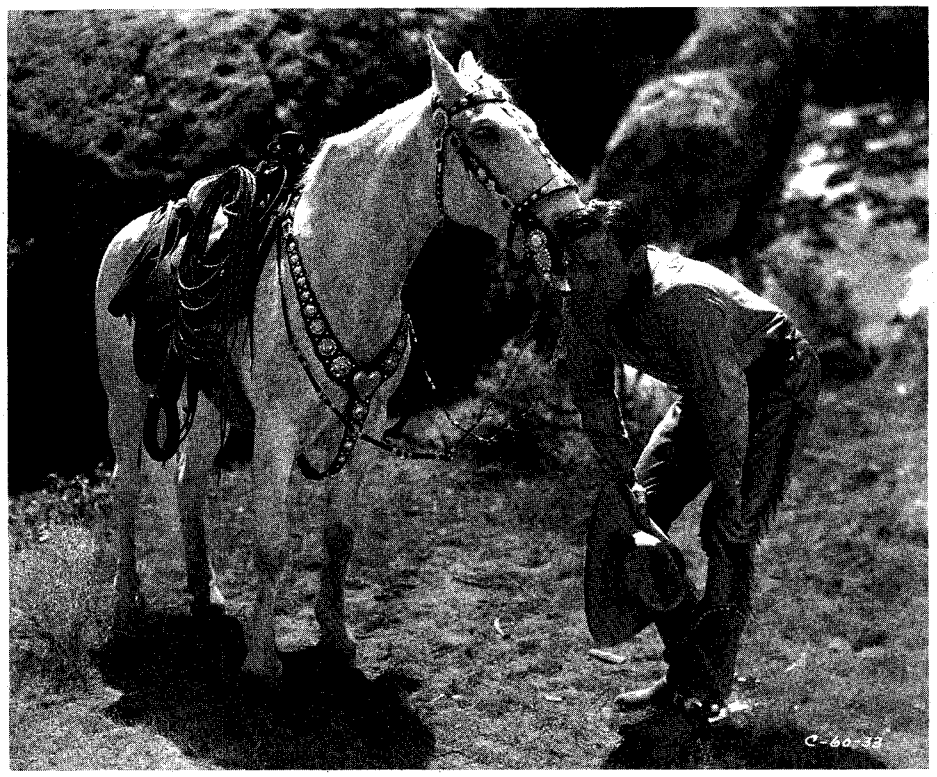
Wherever you happened to live, if it had a movie house, the wide, wonderful and dangerous West was only a few coins away—through a narrow door and just past the yellow popcorn! Who can forget Silver? Who can ever forget the man who rode him?



Buck Jones and his original Silver in a scene from an old Fox movie

decided to return home. For a time Buck worked on his father's ranch and later for a brief period at the Indianapolis Speedway tracks. There he made a friend of Eddie Rickenbacker, who later became America's World War I aerial ace. Buck returned to Columbus Barracks on October 14, 1910, and was once more recruited into Troop G, Sixth U.S. Cavalry.

During the next two years Buck was promoted to sergeant, but found life too routine. He wanted a change and soon the opportunity for such a move presented itself. By 1913 the United States Army was becoming interested in aeroplanes and Buck, who had a love of things mechanical, decided to apply for a transfer. Writing from Texas City, Texas, on March 19, 1913, he applied for a transfer to the Signal Corps, Aviation Squad. By special Orders No. 75, War Department, April 1, 1913, Sergeant Gebhard was transferred to the Signal Corps as a private, assigned to duty with the First Aero Squadron, Signal Corps.

Buck's dream of being able to fly was swiftly dispelled. Enlisted men were not encouraged to become pilots, and even with the help of his friend, Eddie Rickenbacker, he had no luck. To become a mechanic didn't have any appeal, so disgusted by all the red tape he let his enlistment expire and on October 23, 1913, again became a civilian.

FOR SOME MONTHS he wandered around looking for work and then one day learned that the Miller Brothers' 101 Ranch Show needed hands, so he decided to apply. "I put resin on my chaps to help me hold the saddle," Buck recalled in 1938, "and drove horseshoe nails into the heels of my boots to keep my spurs on. Then I went over and asked for a tryout."

The resin did the trick and he landed a job. He soon came to the notice of Zack Miller and it wasn't long before he became a top rider and roper. By the time the show reached Madison Square Garden early in 1914, Buck had firmly established himself. It was here that he met a girl called Odille Osborne.

"I ran away from home and joined the show," Mrs. Jones told me, "and that's the year I met Buck." Odille had been staying at her aunt's home in Philadelphia while her parents toured in vaudeville. Although she could ride, she was not a very good cowgirl.

Her career might have been short-lived if Buck hadn't taken an interest in her and taught her enough to keep the job. They fell in love and decided to get married, but before the final arrangements had been made, they learned that the 101 was due to leave for England on tour. Having decided not to go they then joined the Julia Allen Show.

When the show played Lima, Ohio, they announced their plans to marry, and the show's publicity agent fixed it so that they would be married in the ring with everybody, including the preacher, to be on horseback. On August 11, 1915, Buck and Odille became man and wife.

For the whole of their married life they were a devoted couple, and in the days before motion pictures made him famous, Buck and Odille worked equally hard to keep themselves in food and clothing. When war came to Europe it had a decided effect on show business, so Buck decided that it was time to move on. He got a job as horsebreaker for the British and French Armies at a remount depot set up at the Chicago Stockyards. Buck worked there until America entered the conflict and was then retained for the duration because his qualities as a horsebreaker and rider were recognized as valuable to the war effort.

Part of his job was to select the most suitable horses for cavalry and artillery use. As all the animals chosen were dark, any white or grey horses were turned down. One day a rancher came in with a silver-grey which Buck had to turn down, but something about the horse attracted him. Buck's offer of $100 for the horse was accepted. He named the animal "Silver" and later he was to ride him to a greater fame than Buck could possibly have imagined.

AFTER THE WAR Buck and Odille joined the Ringling Brothers' Circus at $50 a week. They bought a car for $20 at the end of the season, and drove to Los Angeles. It was now 1919 and Odille was expecting a baby. When they reached Los Angeles, Buck rented a small apartment and set out to find work. Soon after the birth of a little girl whom they named Maxine, Buck got work as an extra in Fox pictures, thanks to Scott R. "Scotty" Dunlap, later to become one of Buck's best friends. Work as an extra didn't bring in much money, but it was regular, and Buck decided to stay around Hollywood for a while in case his prospects improved.

The top cowboy at Fox Studios was Tom Mix who, with his horse Tony, enjoyed immense popularity and was said to have earned $25,000 a week at one stage of his career. But Mix was a hard man to handle. He delighted in trick hats and fancy suits which would have made even a singing cowboy of the 1940s blush. Yet for all that, he was convincing on screen. Like most of the top stars of the time he disliked doubles, but he realized that some scenes demanded them. And that is how he and the future Buck Jones came to meet.

Legend has it that he and Buck slugged it out on a vacant lot because Mix was jealous of the other's superior riding skill, but it is doubtful if this story is true because by the time Jones was himself a star, the two were firm friends and remained so for the rest of their lives. When Mix was filming "Dick Turpin," Buck crept into the movie as an extra much to the amusement of them both.

People soon began to notice the tall, well-built, grey-eyed, six-foot Westerner. Letters poured in, and toward the end of 1919 Fox put him on contract. Buck Jones' first starring role was in "The Last Straw" with Vivian Rich as his leading lady. The film went on release in the United States in 1920 and a year later was shown in England. The fans demanded more and it was quickly followed by "The Forbidden Trail," "The Square Shooter," "Firebrand Trevision" and many others.

At one point in his career, William Fox tried to take Buck out of Westerns and put him in straight acting roles such as the famous "Lazy Bones," but his fans clamored for more Westerns. The studio

(Continued on page 63)

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A Banning stage is stopped at Drum Barracks, Wilmington, California, in this 1864 photograph. Phineas Banning was probably the greatest independent stage line operator in California. His name will remain as indelibly in the stage line history of California as those of James Birch and Frank Stevens who organized the California Stage Company.

The BOOM DAYS

By WADDELL F. SMITH

Photos Courtesy Author

Author's Note: In writing this treatise California express companies and stage companies have been dealt with primarily. However the trans-continental stage lines and the Pony Express operated overland into California and are therefore a part of the story.

Also the subjects of "agency" and "agent" have been discussed, since their services have often been confused with the operation of stage lines and the Pony Express.

Due to the complications of stage line and Pony Express history, as confused by "agents" and express companies, it has required a study of many years to bring each of these areas into sharp and separate focus. It is hoped that the subject matter will be of use to historians and writers who can do so much to correct the misunderstanding now in the public mind.

SINCE the stagecoach is much a part of this story, some discussion of terminology is important. The coach, the stagecoach and the wagon are all involved. A "coach" according to Webster is "a large closed four-wheeled carriage, having doors in the sides and an elevated seat in the front for the driver." The coach, therefore, is for the conveyance of passengers.

The next question is, what is a stagecoach? Webster defines "stage" as "a place of rest on a traveled road, a station, a place for a relay of horses."

A wagon is defined as "a kind of four-wheeled vehicle; especially one used for carrying freight or merchandise." From the foregoing definitions it may be ascertained that all stagecoaches are coaches, but all coaches are not stagecoaches and a wagon is neither.

A stagecoach is one which is designed to carry passengers in overland travel over rough and rugged terrain under hardship conditions. It also is designed to carry baggage. On the contrary, horse-drawn coaches were designed for family use on city streets. Many a private home built prior to the turn of the century had stables, coachman's quarters and a coach house in the rear. The coach therein was obviously not a stagecoach.

This article is, therefore, concerned only with stage lines, stagecoaches and wagons and the express companies which used the services of stage lines.

The principal vehicle used on the stage line was the Concord Coach manufactured in Concord, New Hampshire. But there were other vehicles, differently sprung, and perhaps more rugged, which were used for rougher going. They were, namely: the Mud Wagon and the Celerity Wagon. Though called wagons, they were designed to carry passengers and baggage along with mail and express. But since they were not closed, they were not coaches or stagecoaches. They could have been called "stage wagons."

The stage line era in California began with the year of the gold rush, 1849 and with exceptions, ended in 1869 with the completion of the transcontinental railroad. The golden era of staging in California was over those two intervening decades. Localized staging did, however, continue for some time as a service to transport passengers from railroad terminals to more remote areas.

California was a virgin area for development of staging because of the rapid and explosive growth of its population in widely separated areas. In 1849 James Birch pioneered the first stage line into the Mother Lode by operating a one-man, one-wagon line from Sacramento to Coloma. This was soon increased to two wagons and a hired driver, thereby permitting a round trip each day.

In the following year, 1850, Messrs. Hall and Crandall began operating a stage line from San Francisco to San Jose, then the capital of California. Many other lines were formed: Stockton to Sacramento; Marysville to Sacramento; Sacramento to Virginia City, Nevada, etc. Phineas Banning built probably the largest individual stage line operation in the State, in southern California.

It was not long until all of the passable roads in the Mother Lode were traversed by stages running on published schedules from point to point. As stage lines multiplied, ruinous competition among competing lines between the same terminals existed. James Birch had grown considerably in stature and was perhaps the greatest stage line operator operating out of Sacramento, the hub of the wheel.

As "all roads lead to Rome," it could almost be said that all stage lines began

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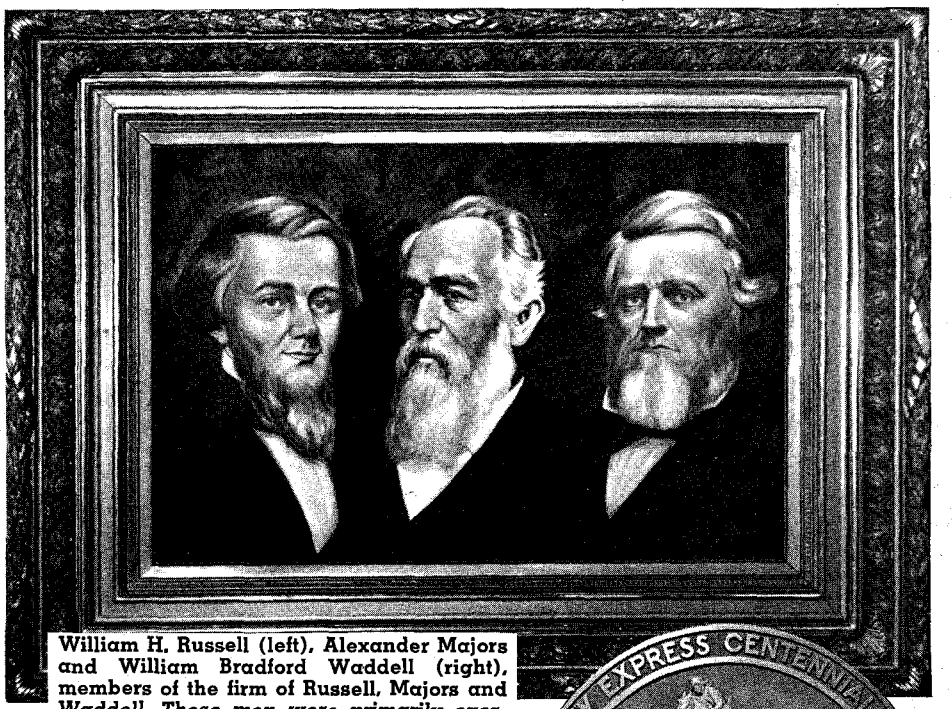
The great-grandson of William Bradford Waddell, one of the founders of the Pony Express, describes the most exciting era in American transportation—that brief span beginning with the Gold Rush and ending with the advent of the rails



William H. Russell (left), Alexander Majors and William Bradford Waddell (right), members of the firm of Russell, Majors and Waddell. These men were primarily overland freighters but went extensively into the business of stage lines. They too were the founders, owners and operators of the famed Pony Express. The bronze plaque on the right is one of one hundred being placed along the trail of the Pony Express.

OF STAGING

in Sacramento. With the advantage of experience and location, James Birch, with his partner, Frank S. Stevens, organized the California Stage Company on New Year's Day, 1854, with headquarters in Sacramento.

This corporation was the result of a merger, by purchase and otherwise, of eighty per cent of all of the stage lines in California. The schedules of the California Stage Company reached up and down the State, in and out of the Mother Lode and up to Portland, Oregon. Well-organized and well-operated organization that it was, this company operated more coaches and traveled more miles of scheduled route than any other in America at the time, but was exceeded later by Ben Holladay and his Holladay Overland Mail Company which operated west from the Missouri River.

TO CLEAR UP the difference between stage lines and express companies the functioning of the stage line and services of a stage line should be clarified.

The stage line, whose name appeared on the letterboard over the stagecoach door, carried passengers. It may or may not have had a mail contract, and if it did, the panel under the door was generally marked with Uncle Sam's eagle and the words "U. S. Mail."

The stage lines also carried packages for many express companies. If the stage line were in an area served principally by one express company, then the stage may or may not have had lettered into the panel beside the driver's seat the words "Adams and Company Express" or "Wells Fargo and Company Express."

But the fact that a stagecoach may have carried express and/or mail does not imply that the Government or the express company owned the stage line. A simple corollary of this is the railroad of yesterday and today.

The air line of today carries passengers and it carries airmail for the Government under contract. It also carries air express for the Railway Express Agency. So the services performed by the stage lines, the railroads and the air lines are the same—passengers, mail and express.

Like the stage lines, there were also hundreds of early-day California express companies, the greatest of which was the Adams Express which was founded in the East in 1839 and which moved into California in 1849 with the gold rush. Within three years it had a vast net-

Wells Fargo's appointment as agent by Mr. Russell was not exclusive as the line had many agents. The ad (below) in New York, July 1, 1861, illustrates that the fees for carrying Pony Express letters were not postal charges but express charges, collected by the agent and transmitted to the operators.

PONY EXPRESS!

CHANGE OF TIME! REDUCED RATES!

10 Days to San Francisco!

LETTERS

WILL BE RECEIVED AT THE

OFFICE, 84 BROADWAY,

NEW YORK,

Which will be forwarded to connect with the PONY EXPRESS leaving ST. JOSEPH, Missouri,

Every WEDNESDAY and SATURDAY at 11 P. M.

EXPRESS CHARGES:

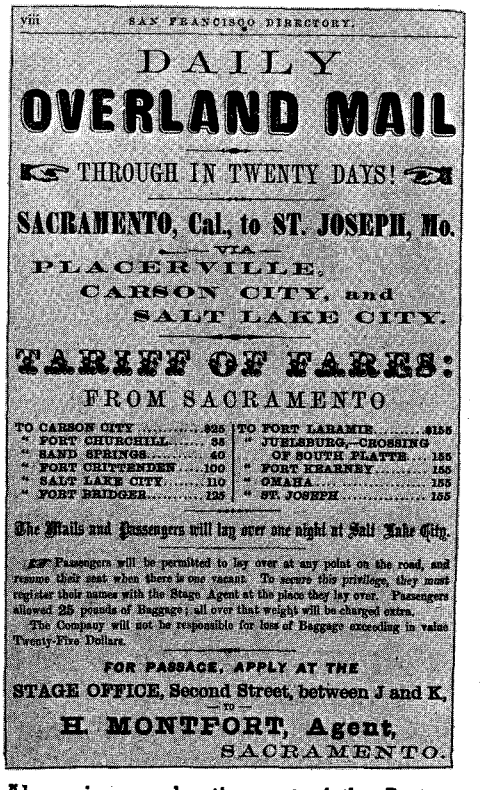
LETTERS weighing half ounce or under $1 00
For every additional half ounce or fraction of an ounce 1 00
In all cases to be enclosed in 10 cent Government Stamped Envelopes,

And all Express CHARGES Pre-paid.

PONY EXPRESS ENVELOPES For Sale at our Office.

WELLS, FARGO & CO., Ag'ts.

New York, July 1, 1861.



viii SAN FRANCISCO DIRECTORY.

DAILY

OVERLAND MAIL

THROUGH IN TWENTY DAYS!

SACRAMENTO, Cal., to ST. JOSEPH, Mo.

VIA

PLACERVILLE, CARSON CITY, and SALT LAKE CITY.

TARIFF OF FARES:

FROM SACRAMENTO

TO CARSON CITY	$25	TO FORT LARAMIE	$155
" FORT CHURCHILL	55	" JUELSBURG,—CROSSING OF SOUTH PLATTE	155
" SAND SPRINGS	60	" FORT KEARNEY	155
" FORT CRITTENDEN	100	" OMAHA	155
" SALT LAKE CITY	110	" ST. JOSEPH	155
" FORT BRIDGER	125		

The Mails and Passengers will lay over one night at Salt Lake City.

Passengers will be permitted to lay over at any point on the road, and resume their seat when there is one vacant. To secure this privilege, they must register their names with the Stage Agent at the place they lay over. Passengers allowed 25 pounds of Baggage; all over that weight will be charged extra.

The Company will not be responsible for loss of Baggage exceeding in value Twenty-Five Dollars.

FOR PASSAGE, APPLY AT THE

STAGE OFFICE, Second Street, between J and K,

TO

H. MONTFORT, Agent,

SACRAMENTO.

Above is an advertisement of the Butterfield Overland Mail after it was transferred from the southern to the central route, beginning July 1, 1861.

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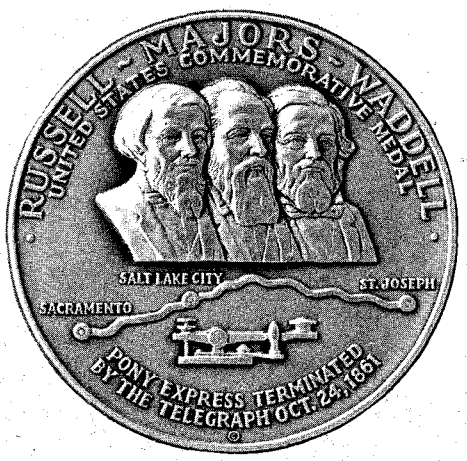


The U.S. Mint manufactured the Termination Medal shown at left and below. It is two-and-one-quarter inches in diameter. One thousand were made of silver and one of solid gold.

work of express offices over the State.

Though the Adams name is fast disappearing from the scene, it was the early great of all California express companies. It, like its competitors, used the services of the stage lines but did not own or operate them. The express companies also used any and all other transportation available.

The steamer *Antelope*, which made a daily round trip between Sacramento and San Francisco, carried freight for any express company which wished its services. The express companies also shipped to the eastern seaboard, either around Cape Horn or across the Isthmus, by utilizing the steamship lines.

In consequence of this, it must be remembered that the express companies on one hand and the stage line operations on the other, were two completely different sets of businesses, each performing a different service for the public.

As a good illustration of the difference, Russell, Majors and Waddell, founders, owners and operators of the Pony Express, formed a corporation to encompass their stage lines and the Pony Express. About six months before the close of the Pony Express, Mr. Russell appointed Wells Fargo and Company as local agent at Sacramento and San Francisco. Wells Fargo soon had the Pony Express "stamps" printed for the use of their customers.

Actually, they were not stamps but "franks," and their use only indicated that the Pony Express fee had been paid to the agent. Wells Fargo then paid the fee to the Pony Express. In addition, the Post Office Department required that each letter should carry a 10c postage stamp.

These so-called Pony Express franks only came into use at the very last, but after the close of the Pony Express, Wells Fargo officials gave them away freely, and since that time they have turned up in quantities in the philatelic sales.

In recent years what might seem to be an abnormal number of Pony Express covers have turned up, with Wells Fargo adhesive franks thereon, some of them with apparently falsified handstamp cancellations.

The prevalence of these has been such as to cast doubt on any and all Pony Express covers bearing these franks. When the regular fee was paid direct to the Pony Express, only the rubber handstamps were applied.

No Wells Fargo franks were ever used on letters from east to west. Some were used at the very last on eastbound letters by Wells Fargo as agent, but only for its own customers. There are those who doubt if any were ever used.

It is certain, however, that these "stamps," actually franks, were printed. And it is also certain that they were counterfeited in Germany and that they were reprinted in 1897 in San Francisco. Claim has been made that these franks were issued by Wells Fargo to meet the requirements of the Postmaster General but they were actually receipts for advance express charges paid to the agent.

The use of these franks and the agency connection of Wells Fargo Express have given the impression that Wells Fargo operated the Pony Express. Nothing could be farther from the truth, and the 1960 Centennial of the Pony Express brought the facts vividly before the public.

Since highwaymanship and banditry on California roads in the early days has been glorified, it should be understood that Black Bart, who held up many stages, never held up a Wells Fargo stage because Wells Fargo operated none in California. He may well have gotten a Wells Fargo treasure chest—but that is explained by the fact that Wells Fargo or any other express company could place a package or a treasure chest on a stagecoach.

If the treasure chest obtained by Black Bart was defended by a shotgun messenger, that is explained by the fact that the express companies often put an armed messenger on the stagecoach to accompany the shipment.

UP UNTIL 1857, mail from the East to California had to come either around the Horn or across the Isthmus and up to California by sea, but prior to that time and beginning in 1850 the Government let separate contracts for the transportation of mail from the Missouri River to Salt Lake City and from Sacramento east to Salt Lake City.

The first contract, eastbound, was let to Chorpenning and Woodward of Sacramento in 1850. Since the carrying of passengers was not a factor and since no stagecoach had an open route to cross the Sierras, Chorpenning and Woodward made the trip on mule back carrying mail only.

The history of Chorpening and Woodward's efforts is marked with tragedy and failure in spite of heroic efforts. The same befell John M. Hockaday and Co. which had the contract to carry mail from the Missouri River to Salt Lake City beginning in 1858. This company attempted to carry mail through to Salt Lake City in a wagon, stopping long enough each day en route to allow the horses to forage and rest.

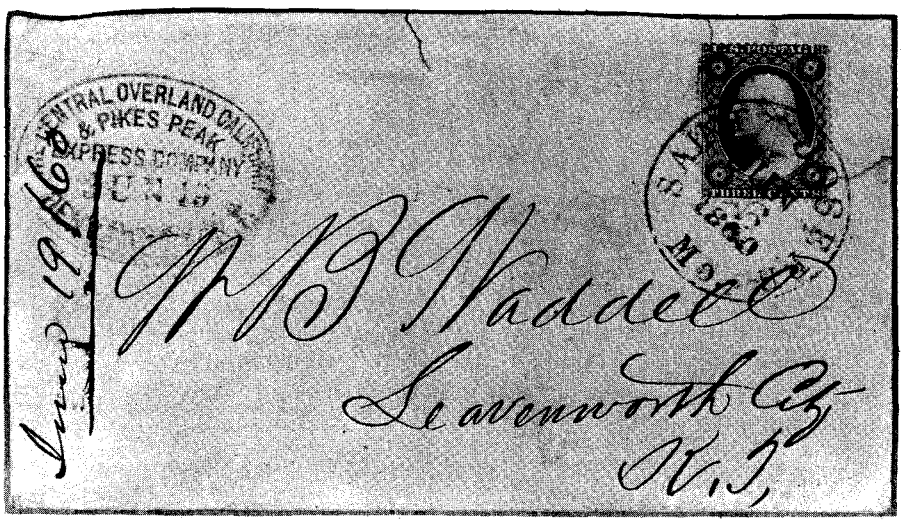
The recorded results of these two heroic operations was that very little mail was carried through and this author knows of no covers (faces or letters) in existence which were carried overland to California during this period, 1850 to 1857.

The Post Office Department, as a result of the supposed impossibility of operating a mail line over the Central Route through Salt Lake City and across the Sierras to California, did, in 1857, let a contract to James E. Birch, the president of the California Stage Company, to carry mail from San Antonio, Texas, to San Diego, California.

This route was not so long and not exposed to severe winters, but the terrain presented such difficulties that, though

(Continued on page 50)

This stagecoach letter mailed in Denver on June 19, 1860, was cancelled at St. Joseph, Missouri, seven days and approximately seven hundred miles later.



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By PAUL ATKINSON

OREGON'S BURIED TREASURE

Here are a few clues to help get you started, and if you start tracking them down, you'll discover more as you go along . . .

EASTERN OREGON is a vast region of rolling grainfields, towering mountains, and dry desert. It is a tremendously big and beautiful country, not overly populated. It is also a treasure hunter's paradise for a person who has time to separate fact from legend regarding stories of buried riches.

I was fortunate enough to have lived in Pendleton from 1952 to 1964, and in this time I heard many stories, several of which I was able to authenticate. I spent as much time as I possibly could searching and digging, but with a wife and five children it's not always easy.

I have set forth here to pass along some of the leads that particularly interested me. Those labeled legend I was never able to verify. Those labeled fact could be checked out, at least enough for me to believe they exist. The areas to search are all within easy driving distance of Pendleton.

The Homestead Fruit Jar—Fact

South of Pendleton, on Highway 395, lies the small town of Ukiah. North of the Ukiah Junction about five miles, running off the south slope of Battle Mountain, is a small creek, known locally as Snipe Creek. Three-quarters of a mile up Snipe Creek, from 395, is the old Frank Cable homestead. The building burned down about four years ago, but the site is easily located. It was on this homestead that a small boy of five took a fruit jar off the table, carried it outside and lost or buried it, and then could never tell his mother or stepfather (Frank Cable) what he had done with it.

This mason jar contained the Cables' savings, in both gold and silver coin. I myself worked for a time with the boy, who is a man in his early forties now. His name is Lloyd Lowell, and he was the first one to tell me this story. Later, on various occasions, I talked with his step-father, Frank Cable, who is at present living on Pearson Creek, south of Pendleton. Frank told me that at the time, the jar probably contained a couple of hundred dollars in gold and silver coin. Today what would they be worth?

On two occasions I searched for this jar with my metal detector, but was pressed for time and could spend only a few hours each trip. On the first occasion I uncovered a 1884 half-dime, and on the second trip I found twenty silver dollars in what was left of an old tobacco can. This story is fact and can be easily verified.

Other people have lived in the house from time to time, but have never uncovered the jar. Frank knew nothing of the silver dollars that I have found, so who knows what else may be in the ground besides that mason jar?

Stage Coach Loot—Fact

Between Pendleton and Stanfield, Oregon, just a few miles north of Highway 30, and running parallel to the highway, runs a long dry canyon known as Stage Gulch. The name derived from the fact that this was the route the stagecoach and other traffic followed to the Columbia River or Umatilla.

Many stages carrying gold and other valuables followed this route, between the Baker goldfields and the Columbia, also from the John Day and Canyon City fields. A stage leaving Pendleton would stop at Stanfield (a distance of some twenty-two miles), then would proceed to Umatilla and the Columbia (a distance of some fifteen miles).

In the early 1900s a stage was robbed just about half-way between Pendleton and Stanfield. Some $1,200 was taken. The outlaws were recognized and were captured in Stanfield the next day, but unfortunately were minus the loot. This was an era of speedy justice and the two men met their demise without saying anything except they had hidden the money in Stage Gulch. A search, of course, was conducted but nothing was found.

Now comes the interesting part. Today at the same site of the robbery stands the Branstitter Ranch. Several years ago while killing chickens, the Branstitters discovered that nearly all of them had gold in their craws. This took place as long as there were chickens on the ranch. There have also been reports, which I was never able to absolutely verify, of pheasant and quail being found with flakes of gold in their craws.

Just three years ago I walked with Bryan Branstitter, now living in Pendleton. He told me that when word first leaked out of gold in the chickens' craws, his family was besieged with people wanting to look for the source of the supply. Nobody was able to find much and the gold fever finally blew over.

It is the belief of most people who know this story, that this gold is part of the stage money. Possibly it was buried in a very shallow fashion and the wind and rains have scattered part of it. Then, too, it's possible the robbers dropped part of it in their haste.

How much is left is a chance you would have to take. You will find that people are usually friendly and ready to help you in your quest for buried treasure. Mr. Branstitter told me three years ago that if I wanted to hunt for the gold, he would go out to the ranch with me and point out as best he could where the chickens used to roam and feed.

The story of the robbery can be seen on micro-film in the Pendleton Public Library. Unfortunately I have forgotten the exact dates, as I have in most of these stories, but all the old Pendleton papers are on micro-film for anyone caring to read them.

The Sparta Story—Legend

About fifteen miles from Baker, Oregon, toward Richland on the highway following Powder River, is the junction to Sparta. Here you turn left off the blacktop onto a gravel road. You drive about five miles, almost straight up at times and then you reach Sparta. There is nothing here except one old building to remind you that this was the site of Fort Sparta. Across the road is a very modern ranch.

This whole country was mined out by miners and prospectors years ago. A lot of them were Chinese. Legend has it that one time the white miners rose against the Chinese to drive them from the country. The Chinese in their hurry to escape were supposed to have pooled their gold in three crockery jars, which they hid, intending to return for them when things cooled off. Legend says they were never able to return for the crocks and that they contained about $80,000 in gold dust.

A local story is told that a crock containing gold was found in an old washout, a few years ago. Interesting, all of it, but I was never able to verify this story.

Baker Ranch Buried Treasure—Fact

Fifteen miles south of Pendleton on 395, is the small town of Pilot Rock. About four miles south of Pilot Rock on the East Birch Creek road you will see the Baker Ranch on the left. Somewhere in the cattle feed lot lies a can containing $1,000 in gold coin. The story as told to me by Mr. Baker four years ago, goes like this.

Around the turn of the century, Mr. Baker's father had in his home $1,000 in gold coin, this being an era before banks were so common. Baker, like many other people, decided the ground was the safest place for his savings. He placed the money in a can, walked a few yards from the house and using a large tree on the east bank, and a large rock on the west bank of Birch Creek as a mark-

(Continued on page 46)

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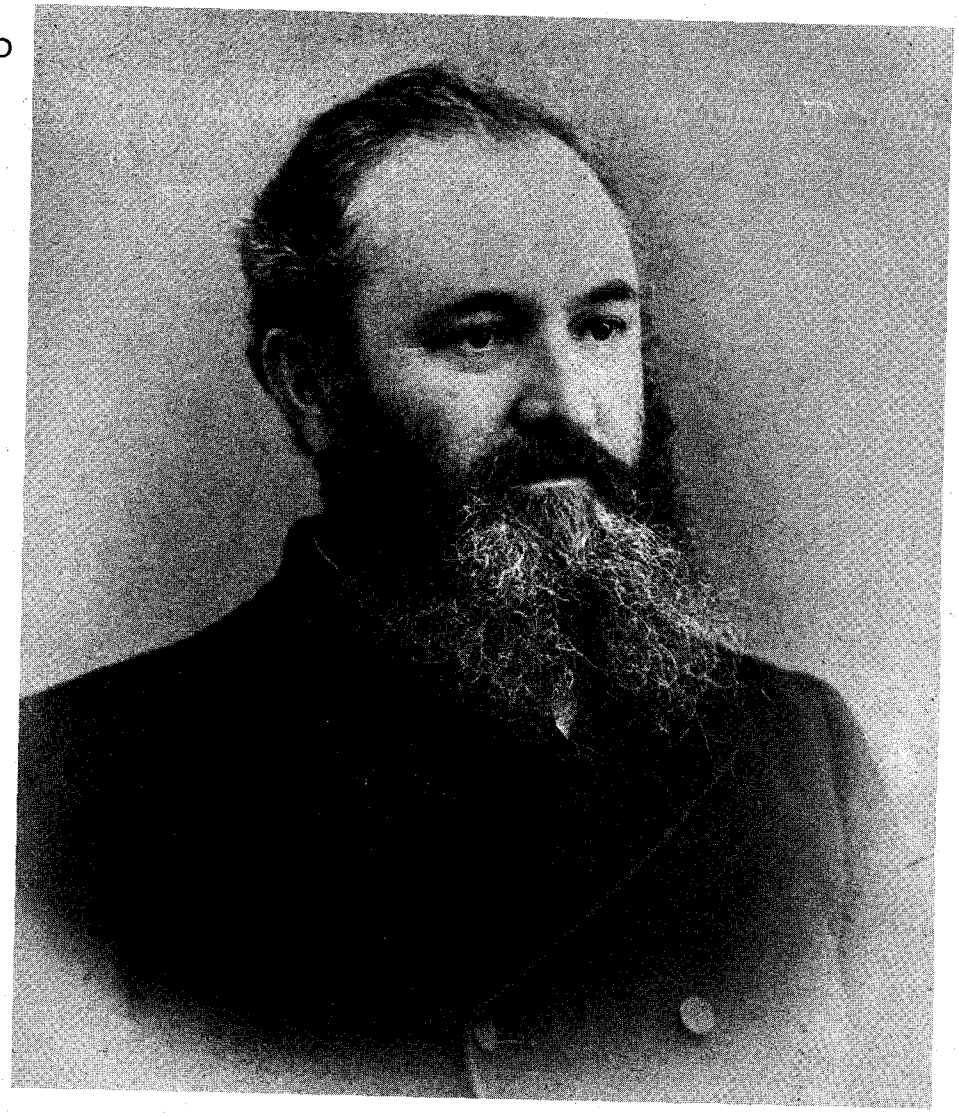
By HELEN ADDISON HOWARD

Photos Courtesy University of Washington



John Dennis Geoghegan—Sgt. O. Sutherland

The COURIER'S

Author's note: In May, 1877, Brigadier-General O. O. Howard, commanding the Department of the Columbia, left Vancouver Barracks for Idaho. It was his duty to see, either by persuasion or force, that the "Non-Treaty" Nez Percés were placed on the reservation the Government had set aside for them near Lewiston. Most Non-Treaty Indians had unwillingly complied with the governmental order, except for Chief Joseph's band who had farthest to go in leaving their ancestral Wallowa Valley in northeastern Oregon, and they were further delayed in crossing flooded rivers with their large herds of livestock. When they finally reached their brethren, three drunken young braves belonging to Chief White Bird's band murdered several white settlers in revenge for the wrongs done them by other whites.

This action precipitated the Nez Percé War and resulted in the battle of White Bird Canyon in which the Indians defeated Captain Perry's command. Following the Clearwater fight with Howard's forces, the main bands of Chiefs Joseph, White Bird and Looking Glass and two smaller groups, fled over the Lolo Trail, hoping to escape to Canada.

Howard's troops pursued but were unable to overtake the Indians, as the heavily timbered country and steep hills made marching difficult and dangerous because of possible ambushes. It was while Howard's battalions were bivouacked near the present site of Lolo Hot Springs at Lolo Pass, some fifty miles west and south of Missoula, Montana, that the General sent a courier to John Gibbon, then a colonel commanding the 7th Infantry Regiment "bearing the welcome tidings that Howard was hastening to Gibbon's relief." The latter's command, numbering 199 soldiers and civilian volunteers, meanwhile had made a surprise attack at dawn on the sleeping Nez Percé village. The engagement, known as the Big Hole Battle, was fought at the mouth of Trail Creek in the Big Hole Basin on the morning of August 9 and continued until August 10.

The Indian warriors rallied from the staggering blow dealt them and put the attackers on the defensive, driving the troops to scattered patches of woods and besieging them for twenty-four hours. Here in shallow breastworks the soldiers held out as best they could with their rapidly dwindling supply of ammunition. Old-timers told the writer in 1926 (a fact not generally known then) that due to lack of ammunition, Gibbon's forces were in imminent danger of suffering the same fate as had Custer's regiment the year before.

"GENERAL HOWARD is coming on as fast as possible, by forced marches with 200 cavalrymen, to give the needed reinforcement."

After he read the dispatch bearing this brief assurance, Oliver Sutherland, B Troop, First United States Cavalry, listened attentively to the bearded General's orders.

"Sergeant, you will push on night and day, until you overtake Colonel Gibbon. Take an Indian along to guide you, and get fresh remounts when necessary. Colonel Gibbon will give you further orders. Start at once, and good luck."

Sutherland saluted and hurried off to the picket line after his horse. The Sergeant, stocky of build, wore a dusty blue uniform, grime-encrusted from the rigors of the march.

He was thirty-eight years old, and a man of experience in Indian campaigning. While awaiting his Bannock Indian guide, he thought over the Colonel's message to Howard.

". . . Indians have eluded Rawn's barricade at the mouth of the Lolo, and are traveling up Bitterroot Valley." Gibbon, the Sergeant reasoned, was too seasoned a campaigner to make molehills into mountains. He needed help.

Once mounted, Sutherland straightened his weary body in the saddle, and forced his tired horse into a jog alongside the Bannock.

Before the trail swung around a bend, darkly masked with firs and tamaracks on the hillsides, willows and alder brush along the stream, the Sergeant must have glanced back with regret at the peaceful camp scene. Blue-uniformed figures lounged around glowing smudge fires in the soft mountain twilight that evening of August 6, while troop horses and pack mules cropped lush meadow grass. Several troopers, ivory-naked in the half-light, splashed noisily in the pools of steaming sulphur springs. They were taking advantage of the tranquil night to refresh themselves after a hot, fatiguing day's march over dense fallen timber.

As he faced the unknown trail before him, Sutherland resolutely settled himself in the saddle and forced his drooping shoulders to a military squareness. Such things, he philosophized, were to be expected when one was campaigning against the likes of Chief Joseph, Looking Glass and White Bird.

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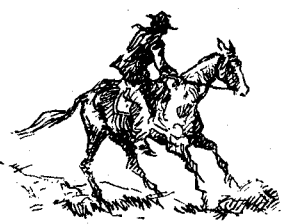
A dramatic example of courage by a man whose service in the Indian fighting army was a mysterious interim under an assumed name!

ORDEAL



Only starlight illumined the rugged path which the horses of soldier and scout followed at a walk. When their way approached a steep slope rising to a hogback ridge, the pair dismounted and led the animals across shelving rock above a shadowed chasm. The roar of water could be heard far below.

At dawn the widening canyon of the Lolo appeared with occasional tilled fields and abandoned log cabins, but no horses or people were visible. Apparently the inhabitants had fled in terror to the haven of Missoula before the oncoming Nez Percés, whose fighting prowess settler and soldier alike had learned to respect.

BECAUSE of jumbled masses of fallen timber encountered during the night, as well as slide rock, hairpin squeezes around sheer cliffs, innumerable fordings of the creek and the generally rock-strewn trail over ridges, spurs and knolls, Sutherland and his Indian guide had covered only twenty-five miles.

The path became smoother as the valley spread out, but the Sergeant was forced to dig deeper with his spurs before the fatigued horse would respond.

While snatching a five-minute rest under a fir tree, Sutherland casually noticed the Bannock Indian ride nonchalantly off through the trees, headed toward Missoula. He'd been deserted by his guide, he suddenly realized. Noting that his mount was trembling on his legs, was sweat-stained and bloody in the flanks from frequent spurring to goad him on, the Sergeant also realized with a pang akin to pity and despair that he must find a remount soon or be reduced to foot travel. Disheartened by his plight and resentful of the scout's desertion, he doggedly climbed into the saddle and allowed the exhausted animal to shuffle along with lowered head.

Sutherland's questing eyes finally discerned a wisp of smoke drifting from the chimney of a ranch house nearly hidden in a foothill of the Bitterroot Valley. On nearing the log cabin the savory odor of coffee and bacon wafted to the hungry soldier and renewed his interest in campaigning.

The door was flung open and a jolly-appearing man emerged to greet him with, "Hallo, stranger, 'Peers ye've had a tough ride by the look of yore horse." He briskly rubbed his hands on a towel and dabbed his grizzled face. He wore no shirt and his hair was still tousled from sleep.

"That's right. I'm carrying dispatches, and I've General Howard's authority to get a fresh horse. Have you got one?"

The settler nodded, "Sure, but you'll hev to do some right smart trottin' to ketch Gibbon. He streamed it through here with his men three days ago."

That aroma of brewing coffee tantalized the courier, and he replied brusquely, "Right, but I'm in a particular hurry. If you'll round up that remount, the quartermaster'll settle with you."

"Just as you say, soldier. But you better turn that cayuse o' yourn into the pasture an' set down to a bite of breakfast first."

Sutherland unsaddled his drooping horse with a pitying gleam in his eye and a regretful shake of the head.

After breakfast, the settler drove a colt into the corral and remarked to the soldier, "There's a tough, travelin' son-of-a-gun. He ain't broke well yet, but I guess you can handle him—bein' a cavalryman."

SUTHERLAND slapped the McClellan saddle on the colt which dubiously eyed his new rider. The animal's expression evoked a goodnatured laugh from the courier. He swung up quickly and immediately felt himself heaved violently skyward. The colt twisted himself sideways as he struck the ground stiff-legged, breaking the cinch. Saddle and trooper were hurled with a crash against the corral fence.

Sutherland attempted to leap to his feet but an excruciating pain blazed up his spine and held him paralyzed and breathless.

"Hurt, soldier?" called the rancher.

Gasping, the Sergeant lay awhile to ease the pain, then very slowly and carefully pulled himself onto his feet.

"Got an extra cinch?" he mumbled, ignoring the other's query.

Tightly he cinched the unprotesting colt again. Then climbing onto the pole fence while the settler eared the bronco, he cautiously lowered himself into the saddle. When freed, the colt lunged into energetic bucking for several minutes, but the trooper grimly clamped his legs and stayed, despite the red-hot jabs of pain in his back. A less courageous man would have given up, but not the noncom whom Howard merely described as a "trusted sergeant."

As he rode away, his face was white and one fist clenched the reins. The other hand was braced on the pommel. All that day he traveled steadily up the valley, past ripening fields of grain, deserted farms, and through the villages of Stevensville and Corvallis. Every sudden move or twist of his body sent stabs of agony along his back. Sutherland was aware that he had severely wrenched the muscles and tendons in the lower spinal region, and that the injury could possibly incapacitate him for months. Yet that dispatch *had* to be delivered.

After leaving the Bitterroot, the courier was hard put to find Gibbon's trail through the marshy meadowland of Ross' Hole. Early on the third morning, he discovered signs of an abandoned camp beside a creek and stubbornly commenced to climb the Continental Divide.

Once across it, rutted wagon tracks led down through a forest of lodgepole pines toward the grass-covered plain of the Big Hole Valley. The misery in Sutherland's back had numbed somewhat. When mounting or stooping, though, it flared into sharp throbs that momentarily shut off his breath. A conviction became rooted in him that he would never outlive the torment from his weakened back, and he pressed onward with a growing feeling of despondency.

Then, unexpectedly at noon, he came upon Gibbon's wagon train encamped in a small park, walled about by dense timber. The mules were closely guarded in a rope corral strung around convenient tree trunks. An air of alert anxiety gripped the detachment of citizens and soldiers who hailed the courier.

"Where's Colonel Gibbon?" was Sutherland's worried demand. "I've got a dispatch from General Howard for him."

Hugh Kirkendall, the citizen wagonmaster in charge, replied, "If you've a message for him, Sergeant, you're too late. The Colonel left last night. It's just been reported that he engaged the Nez Percés at dawn this morning. Their village is in the valley on Ruby Creek."

Disgruntled, Sutherland stiffly dismounted and, going to the wagonmaster's tent, wrote a brief report to his commander within ten minutes after arrival. Dated "12 M 9 August 1877" it read in part:

"I take two men from here, and start in 5 minutes to endeavor to reach Col. Gibbon. . . .Would respectfully state, in explanation of seeming delay on my part, that I was thrown from an unbroken horse at....., and my back severely hurt. My progress from that point being attended with severe suffering. I am, General,

Very respectfully yours,
O. Sutherland
Sergeant Company "B"
First Cavalry."

(Quoted from Howard, *Chief Joseph, His Pursuit and Capture.)*

Meanwhile, Kirkendall had informed the courier about a skirmish at daylight between thirty mounted Indians and six soldiers from the wagontrain who were attempting to join Gibbon's force with a howitzer and a pack-mule carrying 2,000 rounds of ammunition. In the ensuing clash two privates panicked and fled; a corporal was slain; two sergeants were wounded but managed to throw the howitzer off the trunnion before retreating, and the driver was pinned beneath one of the wounded horses. He escaped after the warrior withdrew, and returned to the wagontrain ahead of the

(Continued on page 55)

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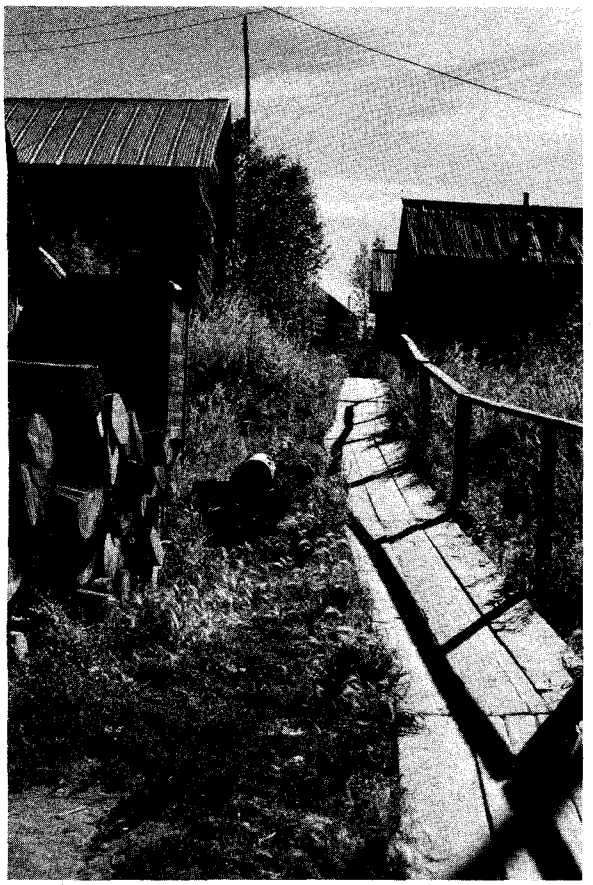
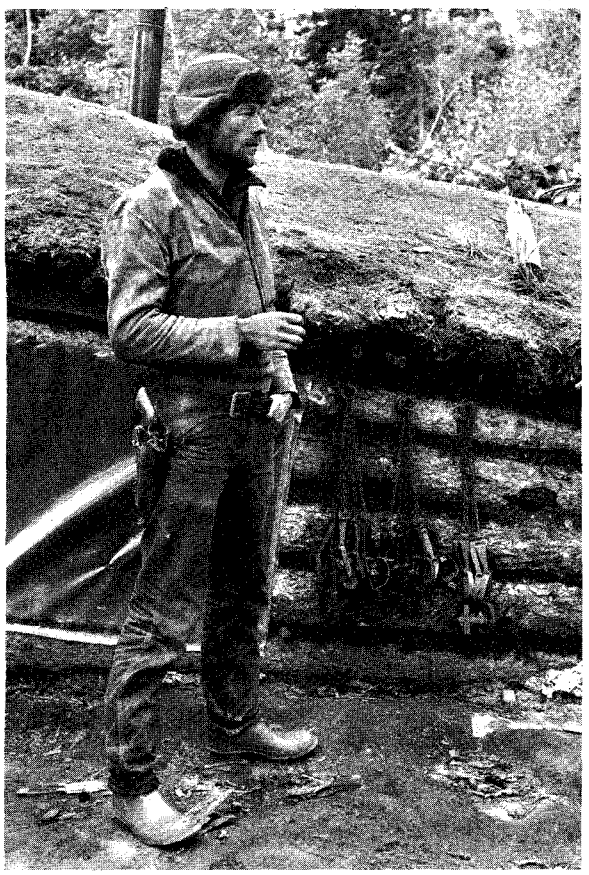


Boardwalks (above) curl up hillsides from the river. "Blondie" (below), as he is known by everyone around Ruby, is an Alaskan pioneer. He moved to Alaska to homestead and took up fishing, trapping, gardening and hunting to support his native wife and children. They live a few miles below Ruby.



RUBY

By MICHAEL JENKINSON

Photos by Karl Kernberger

Eighth in a series of "Ghosts Along the Yukon"

OVER A hundred thousand men went to the Klondike for gold in 1898, but only a fraction of these found paying claims left to stake. For many of those who came too late, there would be no turning back—they floated on down the Yukon, panning the bars, exploring side rivers and streams. Gold camps sprang up all over the interior of Alaska. Most of them today are only place names on a map, a few lonely rotting cabins reached by vanishing trails.

Prospectors found gold on the chill and desolate rivers that empty into the Koyukuk, a tributary of the Yukon. Rapid City, Union City, Soo City and Jimtown were founded. One of the camps, aptly called Coldfoot, boasted in 1902 "one gambling house, two road houses, two stores, seven saloons and ten prostitutes."

An Italian immigrant, Dominic Vernetti, sold out his unrewarding claims to set himself up as an Indian trader, an occupation which he still follows today. Shortly after he disposed of his claims, it was discovered that a sizeable streak of paydirt undercut his tent site, and an even larger vein lay beneath his outhouse.

But shortly after the turn of the century, on a creek some fifty miles upriver from the confluence of the Koyukuk and the Yukon, a strike was made that would completely drain many of the new camps, and excite the pulse of all Alaska.

"On Long Creek," the word was passed, "there's gold enough to make every mother's son in the Far North rich as rubies."

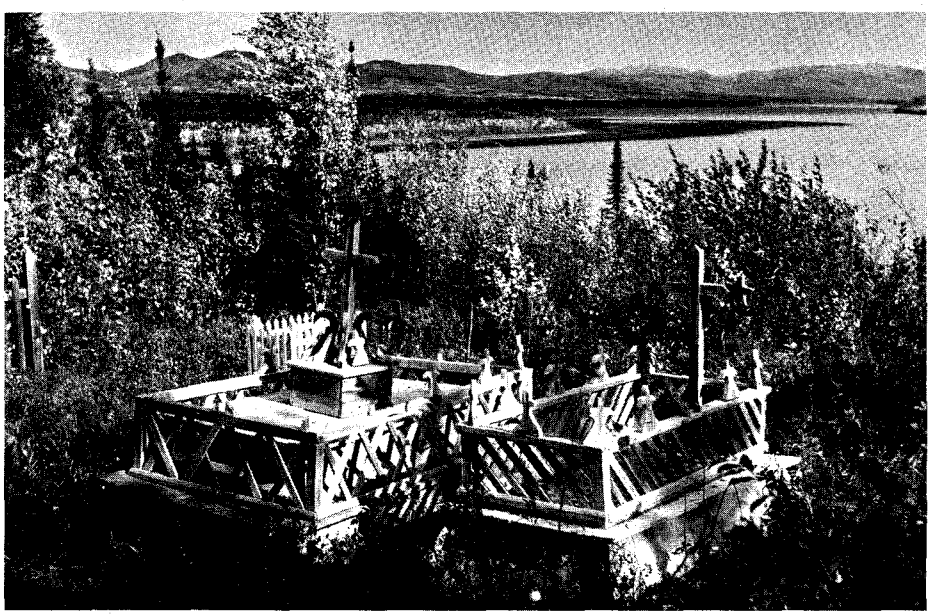
Men and women swarmed to the new strike.

RUBY was what they called the principal town of the mining district. It soon grew to a vibrant hive of more than 5,000 people. Today it is a quiet village of less than 150.

Many of the early-day buildings remain, in spite of numerous fires which have swept the town from time to time. Old worn boardwalks curl up hillsides from the river, past stores long abandoned to the effects of sun and snow. Indian children play among weeds in the yards of windowless cabins. In the winter, they, like the remaining adults of Ruby, play snowshoe baseball to pass the long twilight months.

During the boom days, the saloons of Ruby were lively and numerous. Only one remains open today, a drowsy, informal place where one's whiskey and water will be served up in a jelly jar,

This cemetery on a hilltop has some artistically marked graves.



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Ruby, Alaska, the once bustling home for 5,000 is today a quiet village of about 150. The pretty Athabascan girl at right lives in the little town.

like as not. The saloon formerly doubled as a barber shop, and the barber's chair remains. Most of the locals prefer sitting in it to one of the four stools at the bar, or around the poker table by the window. Here, throughout the winter days of darkness, stories of bears, gold, and violence are told and retold.

Men talk of a wealthy Long Creek miner who, believing in reincarnation, buried vast quantities of gold in the vicinity of his claim, intending to dig it up in his next life and thus start out well-heeled. They remember the miner who put snowshoes on his horses so that they could haul wood in winter; and they speak of the native who became so inebriated he put his wooden leg on backwards, then wondered why he was having such a hard time walking!

Ruby, like all frontier mining camps, has had its share of violence, but perhaps the most curious story concerns a man who was murdered more than fifteen years before Ruby even existed. The victim was Bishop Charles Sehgers, a Catholic missionary and explorer, who had packed over Chilkoot Pass and floated down the Yukon in the late summer of 1886. At the junction of the Yukon and the Tanana rivers, drifting ice forced the bishop and his companion, a man named Fuller, to wait until the river had frozen solid.

Then they continued by dogteam over the river ice. Between the site of Ruby and the mouth of the Koyukuk, Fuller went insane and shot the bishop as he lay in his tent. The following spring Fuller was taken to Sitka for trial, as were two Indian witnesses. He was found guilty of manslaughter and sentenced to ten years.

THE INDIANS returned to their humble village elegant beyond belief to their tribesmen, dressed in tailored finery bought with witness fees. Their accounts of the marvels of civilization caused them to be considered the prime story-tellers of the village. They were envied, and among the young and ambitious many plans were made for trips to the outside. But all faltered for lack of money for passage.

One man, in particular, was obsessed with the idea. Hearing that Fuller paid for his crime with only a few years in a place where one was well fed and sheltered, he decided this price would not be too high for fulfillment of his dream. Murder would be his ticket to those places that had so staggered his imagination.

Shortly after his decision, a miner came to the village to buy some fresh meat. The young man killed him, leaving the body in plain sight beside an important trail. The miner's friends soon found the corpse and, armed to the teeth, made their way to the village seeking revenge. There, they asked if anyone knew of the killing.

The murderer immediately stepped forward, and waited expectantly while others explained his motivation. Soon, he thought, he would be en route to the incredible places where the white man staged his trials. Instead, he was bound to a tree and riddled with bullets.

There are still a few miners who sluice the gravels of Long Creek and gulches that open into it. On summer evenings they occasionally come into Ruby, and sit at the poker table or the barber chair of the saloon, making low reminiscences of boisterous, bygone times.

Outside, the boom town they came to years ago has changed. Streets are empty where exuberant crowds once jostled. Only a few lights burn; buildings are shadowy and silent.

At the feet of Ruby, the Yukon runs silently in darkness, having known no dreams.

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A BANK for

Photos Courtesy Author

The smoldering ruins (above) were all that remained of the original Bank of Italy the day following the San Francisco earthquake and fire of April, 1906. Above left is the present head office building of Bank of America in San Francisco, home base for 850 domestic branches, 22 overseas branches, 11 foreign representative offices, and investments in financial institutions in 18 other countries.

SOME SIXTY YEARS ago, with the raw and rough West fading into the past and the turbulent frontier passing, a new concept of banking was created in the mind of A. P. Giannini and was given birth in vacated saloon quarters in San Francisco.

From out of this concept has come the Bank of America, the world's largest non-government owned bank. And Giannini grew in stature until, at his death, he was recognized as one of the most colorful and amazing personalities in his field.

In the area known as North Beach, Giannini was a thirty-four-year-old, well-to-do leader in San Francisco's colony of Italian immigrants. He was familiar with the need for banking and related credit and financing services among the rank and file. Banking then was tightly administered in elite circles and the vast majority of Americans of the era had never been in a bank, much less had any dealings with one. Such financial institutions were a mystery—a mystery that fostered distrust and suspicion. Most people hoarded their cash, and many relied on a revolver to protect these meager resources.

Small businesses found it difficult to get loans, and the individual who wanted to borrow—say, $100—was in pretty much of a bind. He either had to go to loan sharks, who charged exorbitant rates, or make a deal on the side with a bank officer who would personally lend him money at higher-than-bank rates. For a foreigner, the situation was even more difficult.

Giannini set about to change this. He opened a small neighborhood bank, dedicated to immigrants and the plainest people, for both deposit and credit. In 1904 the former saloon at North Beach became the Bank of Italy. Carpenters made the conversion at a cost of $5,295. Office furniture cost $3,971 and a safe, $750. Fish dealers, milk men, bakers, druggists, teachers, produce workers—even the policemen who patrolled North Beach—bought shares in the new bank.

New accounts totaled $8,870 on the opening day of business. To nearly every one of these first-day depositors, banking was a brand new experience. Giannini and his associates undertook to educate his clients—a pursuit that he never neglected or put aside during his long career. Money and credit, wisely and properly used, can be a servant, was his concept; and money need never be the master of a man's life. No human being was ever too low in the social or economic order to be unwanted or ineligible for the simple services of opening an account or applying for a loan.

"The little Dago bank in North Beach," as bankers on Montgomery Street scornfully referred to it, flourished without any notice. The life and vigor of the new enterprise was its vigor

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the "LITTLE GUYS"

By WILLIAM THYRDE

Giannini won the confidence of people who never before had relied on anything but the sugar bowl and the buried tin can—people who had never seen a teller's cage or known a signature was negotiable

as a free lender. People had assets. The bank was in business to make loans and issue credit against these assets.

Within the first year its quarters had to be enlarged. The bank was not a member of the clearing house and arranged for clearance through the American National Bank in San Francisco. Later, it arranged with the Crocker-Woolworth Bank for clearing house service and also to keep its cash reserves, principally gold in those days, in its vaults. Small accounts, which Giannini actively solicited, added up to more than $1,000,000.

ON APRIL 18, 1906, the proud capital of the West, San Francisco, was shattered by quakes and later gutted with fires. Strange scenes were staged in the banking and financial institutions.

Martial law was proclaimed and buildings were dynamited and leveled by artillery fire to check the flames. Soldiers were ordered to shoot on sight when looting of the ruins started.

The earthquake occurred in early morning, and the fire started shortly after. Two bank employees, finding the bank building still in good shape, withdrew the bank's cash as usual from Crocker-Woolworth. When Giannini later came on the scene, he found the fire spreading and it appeared possible it might engulf the North Beach area.

Taking no chances, he obtained two vegetable wagons. He stashed the bank's cash (about $80,000) into the bottom of one of the wagons, and covered it over with crates of oranges. That night, he drove the wagon to his home in San Mateo, where he stored the cash in the ashes trap of his fireplace.

The Bank of Italy reopened for business on April 27, nine days after the earthquake and five days after the fire was finally extinguished by rain. The bank had temporary quarters in the home of Giannini's brother, but the bulk of business was done at a wharf on the waterfront. There, in a "branch" that consisted of a plank counter and a bag of money from the cash he had saved, Giannini made loans to help San Franciscans get back on their feet—to start rebuilding. In the meantime, the other banks of the city remained closed. They did not reopen, in fact, until May 23.

By autumn, the program of reconstruction was in full swing. San Francisco needed vast quantities of materials and Giannini and his Bank of Italy were equal to the situation. More than 500 new buildings went up in the North Beach area. One newspaper reported, "Some of the first loads of lumber that were hauled to North Beach were paid for out of money made available from the Bank of Italy. . . . The loyalty and confidence and judgment of the directors of the bank and the good faith and energy of the homeless people were the elements that went into these first financial bargains after the calamity."

In 1930 the Bank of Italy became Bank of America. Amadeo Peter Giannini, who in 1877 had been left fatherless at age seven, built an organization that covers the entire State of California, with banking services in more than 360 communities and in more than 20 countries overseas. Perhaps the key to his success was the urge to do something to improve the lot of those around him. He developed men of outstanding talents but remained mindful of the lowly. All his personal wealth went to worthy causes. Stories of his benefactions are legion, but many more are known only to the benefited.

A. P. Giannini in 1910 when Bank of Italy was in its sixth year. He died in 1949 at the age of seventy-nine. The advertisement below appeared in the Los Angeles *Evening Herald* . . . announcing the entry of the bank into Southern California.

THE BANK OF ITALY has been, from its inception and is now, ready and anxious to make loans to people owning, or intending to build, their own homes—to the smaller mortgage borrowers who need $1000 or less. ¶ The BANK OF ITALY has built up, its present reputation, its present enormous resources, largely through catering to the small depositor—the wage earner, the producer, the small business man, the man who owns a small home or a piece of improved property, the man who is the bone and sinew of Southern California's progress. ¶ This bank has never catered to speculators. ¶ To men of the home-owning type particularly, we hold out now the opportunity to effect a loan, the opportunity to borrow money on their small holdings. ¶ And in this bank there is no need for the payment of brokers' fees or commissions, no need for working through a third party, no expenses in connection with the drawing of mortgage papers. ¶ No cost of any kind.

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Oklahoma Historical Society

Little Wing

THE MYSTERY OF LITTLE WING'S MEDICINE SACK

By VIAHNETT SPRAGUE MARTIN

Did this Indian have extra-sensory perception? The trader who impulsively betrayed a trust and who had to live with a feeling of guilt and fear of discovery for so many months, makes a good case for ESP!

IN JUNE, 1872, the Osage Indians were assigned land between the 96th meridian on the east and the Arkansas River on the west in present-day Oklahoma. Their agency was established at Pawhuska.

The Old Red Store faced north up a steep hill leading to the Agent's residence and the Agency school. It was just west of the Council House. In front of it the road ran east to Rocky Ford; west, past the camp site of Big Joe, Governor of the whole Osage Tribe, down across Bird Creek and then on to the Big Hill country.

Around the west corner of the Old Red Store a dusty road led past John Florer's house which was joined to the store by a picket-fenced yard, and on down to where Black Dog and his band usually camped.

Below the steep hill in front of the store, curving around its base, stretched the dusty trail to Coffeyville and Independence, forking up near the border.

The front door of the store opened into a big room where the Osages loitered—what was there to hurry them, now that the hunt was no longer possible? Their needs were supplied from the shelves, not from the buffalo. Trading or gambling was their chief amusement.

Along the store's south wall were three rows of shelving with a row of bins below in which—beginning at the east and under the strouding and blankets and calico—were stored corn, dried apples, beans, brown and white sugar, rice, coffee (Indian coffee was Government Rio) and lastly, a big bucket of candy. A counter paralleled the shelves.

Strouding, on the top shelf at the east end, was a heavy material of either plain dark blue or bright red, which trader Ed Finney cut off in three-quarter yard lengths for the women to make into skirts. Its raw edges at top and bottom served as stripes. It never frayed. Men's trousers were sometimes made of this, the stripes going up the leg. On skirts the stripes made a border. Of course, if something cheaper than this fine material was desired—the Kaws, for instance, were desperately poor—there was gaudy calico in bolts on the bottom shelf. Between were stacked blankets, bright as to color, usually striped, long-wearing and shipped from St. Louis.

(Not long ago I presented to the Osage Museum in Pawhuska a brown blanket beautifully patterned, in first rate condition, that Mrs. Finney took from the shelves about sixty years before she gave it to me in 1930!)

In the top second section from the east end, or office end, was muslin. Below were threads, gay-colored ribbons to decorate the shoulders of men's shirts, beads, "hock bells" in two sizes—later called "hawk bells"—for leggings and moccasins.

Needles had come in with the traders, replacing the bone ones. Indian women developed an exquisite skill with them, stitching the rows of ribbons to the men's shirts, each strip a different color. They further added to the effect with a cutwork design in the ribbons, hemming down the raw edges with almost invisible stitches! The ribbons blew free at the ends and created a garish effect that struck white women as too funny for words until, from close association, the grotesqueries of dress were overshadowed by the natural dignity of the wearer. Alice Finney explained that one became so accustomed to the regalia of the braves that one saw the person rather than his sometimes fantastic get-up.

Hock bells, round, brass, and with a slot and a ring to hang by, came in two sizes. The larger ones were about the size of a walnut, and at payment time when 2,000 Osages gathered, those bells jingled from morning till night. When worn by men, they were fastened on garters which were outside the leggings.

The smaller ones, tied to a big bow of willow, amused the babies as they swung from a branch in a baby board. The board was about fourteen inches wide and three feet long. On it was a pad stuffed with deer hair, or later on, feathers. The baby was bound to it by strips of soft deerskin or calico, with their arms under the covering when asleep, but free when awake. As soon as the baby could hang onto its mother's neck the baby board was discarded, and the child rode blissfully everywhere tucked in the fold of the woman's blanket between her shoulders.

Babies were watched carefully at all times. Alice Finney was surprised to notice that a baby smelled as sweet and clean as any white infant when one came into the store with its mother.

In warm weather the little ones in outlying camps were usually quite innocent of any clothing, but around the Agency they dressed more and more like white children. Even the men preferred trousers made from strouding or fancylist to their buckskin leggings—but only mixed-bloods would wear shoes! The others stuck to their moccasins which some white men who had tried wearing them on the trail, declared were as comfortable footwear as one could wish—in dry weather.

Fancylist was a kind of strouding with bright stripes across its width about every three-quarters of a yard. It was popular but expensive. Below the fancylist in the fourth section were knives of many kinds. Other hardware included awls, three-cornered needles used for working with buckskin, simple tools, etc. Many of the braves wore all manner of silver and wampum ornaments in their ears, dragging down the lobes to an amazing length!

LONG BEFORE Ed Finney brought his bride to the Agency, the Old Red Store, owned by Florer & Rankin, brothers-in-law, had acquired weather-boarding, and had been re-roofed with shingles instead of the rived cedar shakes.

A stairway led from the customers' section to the loft and there, on winter evenings, it was not unusual for a dozen or fifteen braves to stretch out on the floor of the loft in their blankets if, as in payment time, they had no women with them to set up a wickiup. Permission was asked—and always given—for them to sleep in comfort and warmth.

In 1871 when the Osages had been moved down in a bitter cold winter,

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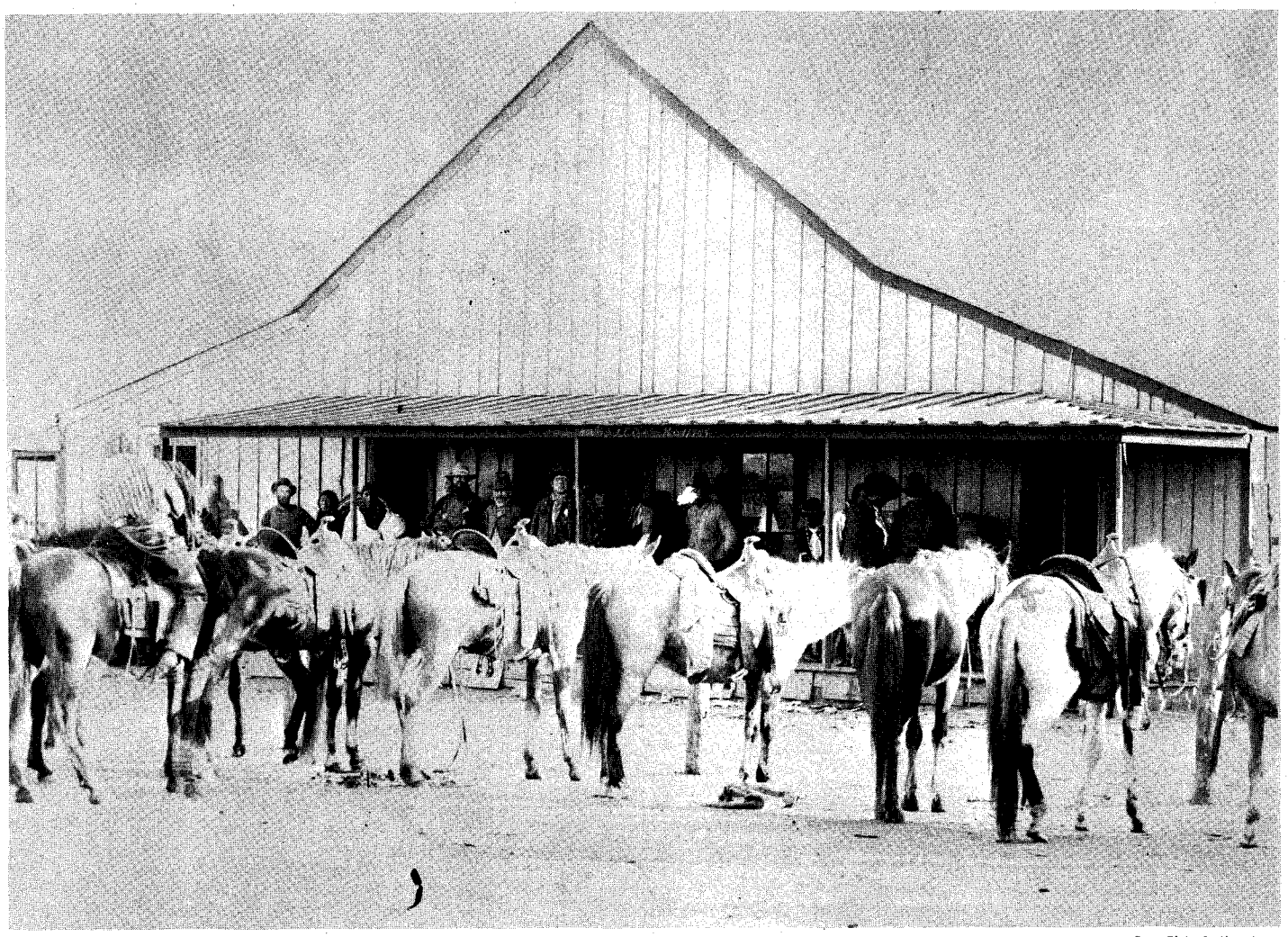

Ben Fish Collection

Little Wing's treasure reposed undisturbed for years in the high loft of the Red Store shown above.

they were first unloaded on the wrong side of the 96th meridian. The mistake was soon discovered, and with no attempt to keep their belongings in any kind of order, in 1872 things were piled into wagons and again unceremoniously dumped at Pawhuska's present location.

There was much confusion, and in the stress of getting settled, many Osages asked to put trunks (rawhide covered) or other possessions in the loft.

"There was the craziest conglomeration of stuff up there," Alice Finney remembered, telling it sixty years later. "Some of it hadn't been touched for years!"

The traders left it alone, but took no responsibility, and there were no complaints of anything missing. The Osages might steal ponies from other tribes—but they did not steal from each other!

When they went out on the last hunt, some of their stored possessions were cleared out, but some remained. And one day, succumbing to temptation, Ed and his brother, Tom, had what they were to remember as an "uncanny experience."

They were putting things to rights up in the loft, when they came on an old trunk which probably had been there for years. All of a sudden they had a curiosity to know what was in it—that was all, then. Just have a look!

Well, they took off the hide, pressed in the front at the top and pulled the lid out to open the lock. Suddenly they found themselves whispering. Grown men they were but they felt like children bent on mischief!

They convinced themselves that the trunk belonged to nobody living or it would have been carried off to one of the camps. It hadn't been touched or claimed for many years.

First came a piece of Indian matting, woven of rushes, carefully folded. They took this out and laid it on the floor. Next was a huge panther skin nicely tanned, folded to fit the trunk size. Smaller things, like beaded moccasins, leggings, beaded knife scabbard and some fancy pieces of blanket were lying on a three-point blanket. None of this was uncommon to traders' eyes.

Then about halfway down they saw a Medicine Sack! Here was a genuine thrill. Nothing in the world was more personal to an Indian than his Medicine Sack. An Osage valued it like his life. He would sell or trade most anything, or gamble most anything—but never his Medicine Sack. This one was of buckskin, about eighteen inches square, most elaborately made, with a flap over the top and half-way down one side.

Ed picked up the Sack and opened the flap. His heart fairly stood still with shock. It was full of human scalps. "One by one we took them out and laid them on the blanket—young and old, Indians and whites! All were hardened and blackened with age. Twenty-four lay on the blanket," Ed told his wife later. "We looked at each other and whispered back and forth. Of all the creepy feelings I ever had, this was the worst. Human scalps! My own twitched!"

Alice was nauseated. Tales of Indian horrors crowded into her mind in the pause before Ed went on with his story.

"Then a fool notion struck me. What in tarnation ever made me want to do it I'll never know! But on an impulse I decided to keep a couple of those scalps. Tom took a couple, too."

The men didn't look any farther in the trunk. They replaced everything with the greatest care, locked the trunk, put the rawhide back, and shoved it way under the slope, close to the eaves where they had found it. Who was going to know? Four scalps—certainly something that few, if any, whites could show as souvenirs of their days in Indian country!

FOR A WHILE after the two men came downstairs they felt kind of spooky. Then they got busy and gradually forgot all about it in their hustle to keep up with the trading on so busy a day. The next morning was busy, too. A party of braves slept the night in the loft, then departed with their supplies.

Hardly had they disappeared down the road toward Rocky Ford when from the other direction (west) came a lone Indian, plainly in a hurry. There was something odd about him; Ed sensed it.

He rode past the store, flipped his lariat over the limb of a dead tree in

(Continued on page 47)

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Wild Old Days!

Courtesy Author

Sgt. John L. Sullivan

MOST VICIOUS DOG IN THE WEST

By James Presley

IN 1896, Governor Charles A. Culberson ordered Sergeant William John L. Sullivan of the Texas Rangers to the unruly town of San Saba to put down the mob rule which had existed there for the past sixteen years. Sullivan, tall, black-bearded native of Mississippi, who had grown up on the frontiers of Texas, was selected because of his experience and reputation for toughness and fairness. He was, furthermore, a familiar figure in San Saba. Sent there in 1890 to preserve order while court was in session he had, in the intervening years, kept up his acquaintance with the leading citizens of the town. He seemed perfectly fitted for the assignment.

During the next several anxious months, Sullivan's most effective ally was not to be a fellow Ranger or his .45—but a dog.

San Saba, a county seat town on the south bank of the San Saba River about a dozen miles before it flows into the Colorado, was the scene of a bitter, lawless strife between the "mob" and the "anti-mob." Originally the mob had organized to fight lawlessness. In time their opponents also banded together, alleging that the law should be allowed to take its course. So much bitterness had accumulated between the two groups that several murders had already occurred by the time Sullivan reported for duty. His orders were to suppress the powerful faction which frustrated the orderly processes of law.

Sullivan arrived in San Saba with three Rangers to assist him—Dud Barker, Edgar T. Neal and Allen Maddox. Once he had arrived, the county furnished him with a wagon, harness, and a span of mules. The State of Texas chipped in with a cook.

At first both mob and anti-mob groups were suspicious of the four Rangers. Everywhere they went they met only sullen faces or, in some instances, outright hostility. So serious was the situation that the quartet of Rangers swore to stay there until their job was done—or, if necessary, die together.

"We vowed that we would arrest anybody of either faction, whom we caught disobeying the law, and that we would die working the lever of our guns before we would give up our prisoners, no matter how many men we had to fight," Sullivan recalled later in his memoirs.

In the midst of his difficulties, Sullivan was called to Wellington, at the bottom of the Texas Panhandle, to testify against some cattle thieves. While he was there a local friend gave him a large dog which proved to be a truly secret weapon in his struggle against the mob in San Saba. The Ranger named him Bill.

The big hound, weighing all of 110 pounds, had been raised on the dusty streets of Wellington and was as harmless as the town braggart, but he was a terrific actor. One look at Bill was enough to convince a stranger of the dog's leonine ferocity. He reminded Sullivan of a man apparently straining to get into a fight but actually afraid of his opponent.

Away from Wellington no one but Sullivan knew Bill's true self, and the Ranger decided he could use the big hound when he returned to San Saba. In Fort Worth, on his way back south, Sullivan bought a fine collar and two chains for the dog. Then he sent Bill by express to Lometa, where owner and dog got off the train to finish their trip by stagecoach.

Sullivan put both chains on the big mastiff and when they reached Lometa he chained Bill to the stage, strengthening the impression that the dog was hard to control. Bill performed his role perfectly, surging and stretching against the chains as though he was about to wreak havoc all over San Saba County. Watching Bill strain and listening to his deep, ominous growl, Sullivan was reminded of a wild tiger.

Bill played his part so well that the stage driver was deathly afraid of the dog's white, flashing fangs. That night as the stage rumbled along the road, the driver halted to meet a customer who had ordered some syrup earlier that day. As the old man stepped out of the woods with his two dogs, Bill scented them and charged, barking fiercely. The performance doubled the driver's fears.

"Don't get any closer!" the driver warned the old man. "Sullivan's got his bloodhound on the stage, and he's about to turn everything over now. If he broke loose he might kill you!"

The driver explained he'd set the jug of syrup on the ground and the nester could pick it up when the stage pulled away. The incident helped boost Bill's reputation, and as they journeyed on toward San Saba the driver inquired about Bill's record.

"Where'd you get a dog like that?" the driver asked.

"Friend of mine who lived in New York gave him to me," replied Sullivan slowly. "Back there in New York Bill used to work for the officers at Sing Sing. I guess in his time he's run down some of the most noted criminals in the United States."

"Lordamighty!" exclaimed the driver. He was joined by a general gasp from the other passengers on the stage.

"I'm going to use him in San Saba," Sullivan announced casually. "Wouldn't be surprised if he's not the most vicious dog in the West!"

The stagecoach arrived in San Saba around midnight, and Sullivan checked into the hotel. By morning the whole county knew about "the most vicious dog in the West." That day San Sabans used up most of Sullivan's time asking him about the dog. Sullivan told them Bill's "whole wonderful history."

"Let him chase somebody!" one man shouted.

Sullivan rejected the suggestion. "I've got business for Bill. Can't get him involved in foolishness," the tall Ranger said. "At the proper time he'll show his blood. But mainly I'm afraid he might kill somebody, and I don't want to be responsible for anything like that happening."

Sullivan's plain statement made them fear Bill more than ever, and they cut a wide path as Sullivan plowed through the streets with the tugging dog.

Sullivan kept Bill chained at his camp on the river, and people came from all around to see the imported man-killer. He obliged by continuing his routine of snapping, growling and exhibiting his deadly-looking fangs.

"Don't get too close to him! He's not a play-dog," warned Sullivan. "And better not look too hard at him—he might

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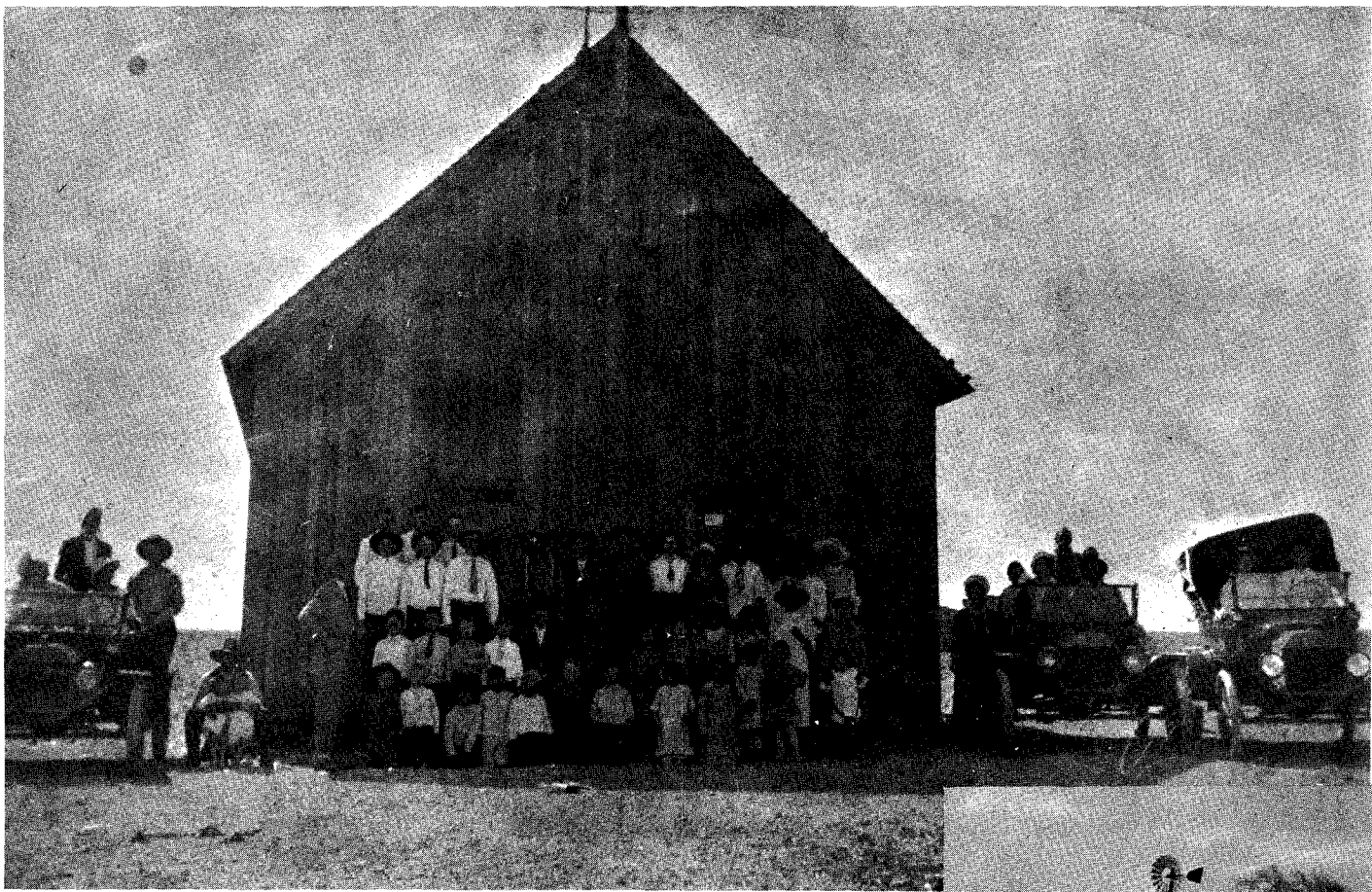
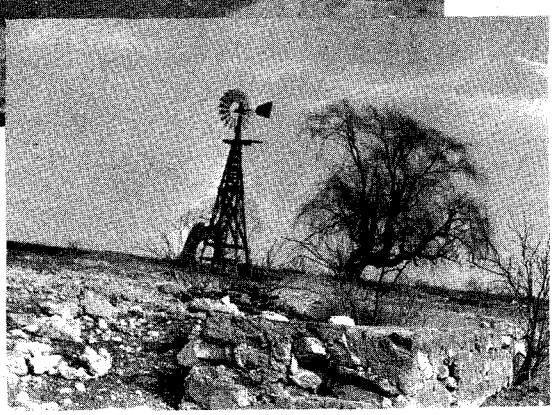


Courtesy Author

Some of the early-century students of the Pearl Valley school are now among the leading citizens of southwestern New Mexico. Today there is only a windmill, a pear tree and a weeping willow where the school once stood.



break loose and tear up somebody before I can get to him."

The dog was a powerful secret weapon that Sullivan, fortunately, never had to unleash. Years later he remembered: "Not a single murder occurred while I had Bill, and I had no occasion to use him, for which I was very thankful, as Bill would have proved an absolute failure had I ever unchained him and set him off after a criminal."

In time, the two opposing factions made peace in San Saba, and Sullivan and his Rangers—and Bill—left town. The last time Sullivan was in San Saba he noted almost everyone was going to church and visiting each other. It was once again an amicable Texas town.

PEARL VALLEY

By Monk Lofton

"HIS" VALLEY, in which we were traveling, took in a large ranching area lying to the west of Hobbs, New Mexico. I don't know what it was that was sort of extra special about him—maybe in the way he greeted us. His friendliness was warm, but not overdone. There was something about him that put us at ease right away.

We had never before seen Nathan T., nor were we familiar with any of the Roberts family. Nathan C., his father, had died in 1947, and the son was there all alone the day we called.

"You all come on in," he said, after answering our inquiry about a nearby ranch. "I was just fixing to put on a pot of coffee."

Outside the house was a man's world with cattle and horses in the corrals and in the pastures. Once inside the house, however, there she was, in every nook and corner, in the pictures on the wall, on the knick-knack shelves, in the handmade rugs that covered the floor.

To each of our comments on the subdued charm of the large front room with the fireplace, he seemed to acknowledge a woman's touch, without ever once saying, "She," or "Mother," or "Pearl."

Finally, when my wife ventured the mention of his wife, he smiled warmly, and said, "I never did marry; I lived here with my mother."

Somewhere between his hidden grief and his casual complacency, we found that his mother had died but little over a week prior to our visit. Or so he finally told us. His father had been one of the first homesteaders of the Valley—Nathan T's Valley, now—since both his father and mother were dead.

"My parents came to this country in 1902," he said, "the year before I was born right here on the ranch."

The location we had stopped to inquire about turned out to be where the old Pearl School had stood. The schoolhouse had long been gone, so had the little town. The post office of Pearl had been closed since 1928. It had been run by Pearl, herself, from 1908 to 1928.

"After serving its purpose to educate us kids," Nathan T. Roberts said, "the school was consolidated. With faster travel, the little town was no longer needed, since most of the ranchers from the Valley went to Hobbs and Monument for their supplies, and finally, even the post office was closed. The town just died a natural death," he said with pride, and certainly not with regret.

"Pearl lived to be eighty-seven years old. Sixty-three years of her life were spent right here in the Valley. She had the town, the school, and the entire community named for her. She outlived all of them, but now they are all gone."

Remorseful? Not in the least. Each of them served its useful purpose to open a big, new country.

BUMMER HILL DUST

By Ed Eline

BAD-CHECK writers and counterfeiters were rare in the gold mining days of the West, but even then there were some who would try anything, *once or twice. The gold of Idaho Territory's* Boise Basin was worth $16 an ounce in trade and anywhere from $13 to $19 at the government assay offices, depending on where it had been mined. A little handful of gold meant a plentiful supply of bad booze, painted ladies, groceries, faro tokens and other necessities of life in the mining camps.

(Continued on page 49)

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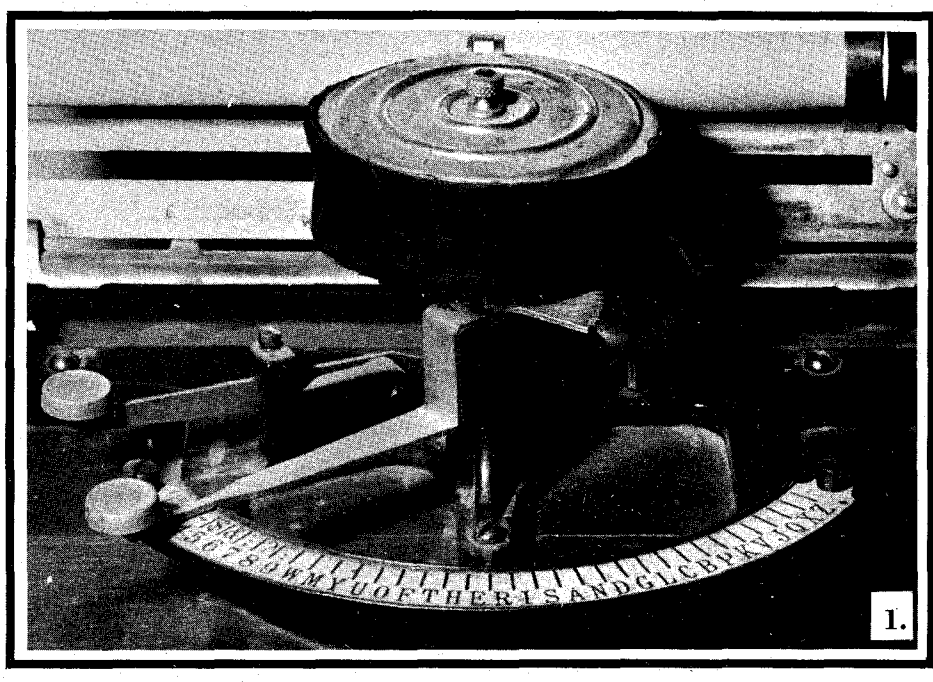

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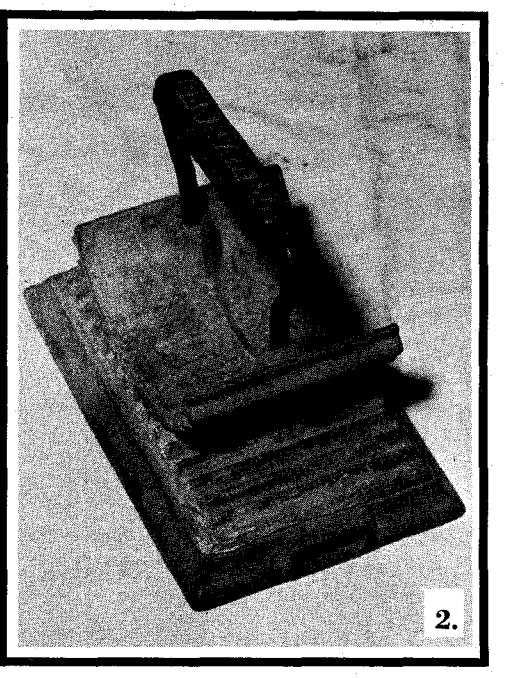

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So You Think You Know The West?

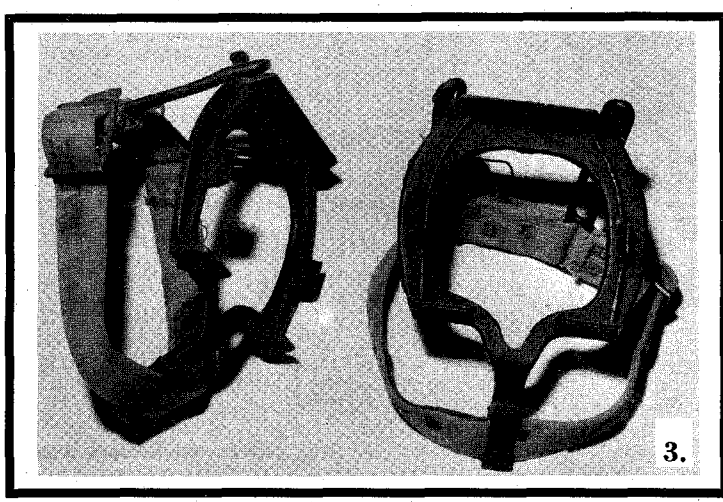
By JOHN R. CLAWSON

SOMETIMES it seems that it would be the greatest treat in the world to go back and re-live the exciting days of the Old West. A man only need slide into his boots, strap up his gun belt, mount that already saddled horse, and ride into town. In reality, it wouldn't be that easy.

The summers were hot; the winters were cold; the rain was wet; and the ground made a hard bed. These things are true today but with a vast difference: horses didn't have windshields; houses offered little more than minimum shelter from the elements; doctors and dentists were few and far between; babies were born at home, and teeth were pulled with pliers. Life had miseries.

Adjusting to the physical hardships endured daily by pioneer families would be difficult for many of us. Equally difficult, and infinitely more strange, might be adjusting to the working gear of the day.

Here are photographs of some of those items used by different people in the Old West. Some were designed to make life a little easier, others to earn a living. If you were suddenly transported back in time, how would you fare? See how many objects you can identify or define, then turn to page 63 for correct answers.



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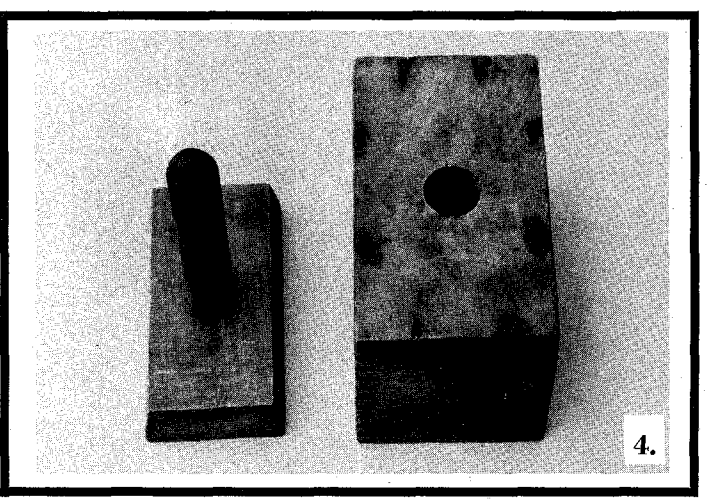

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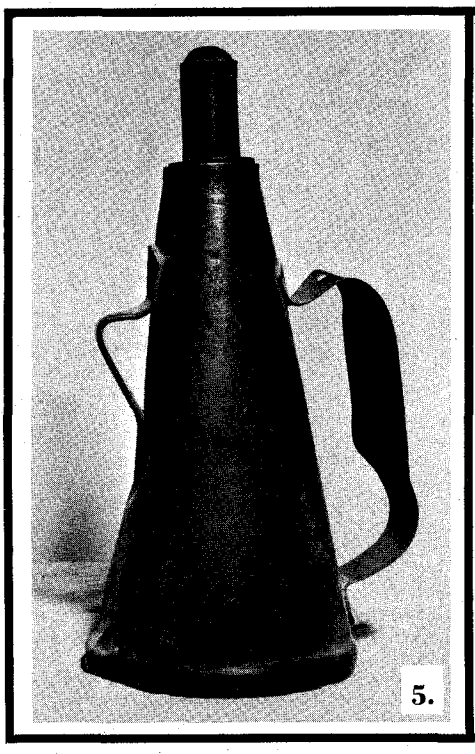

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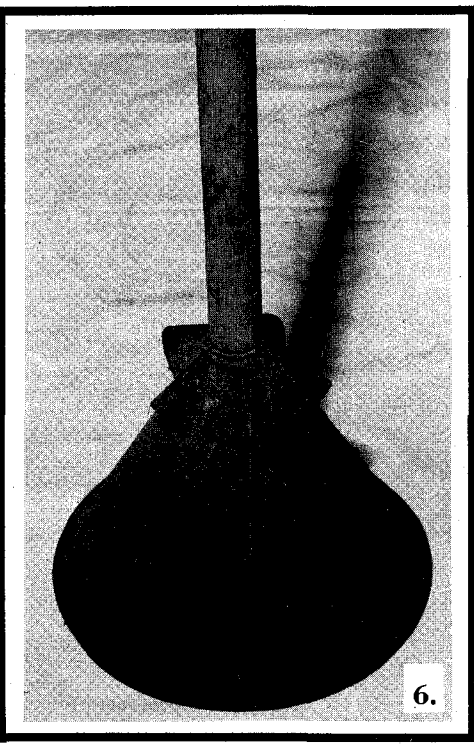

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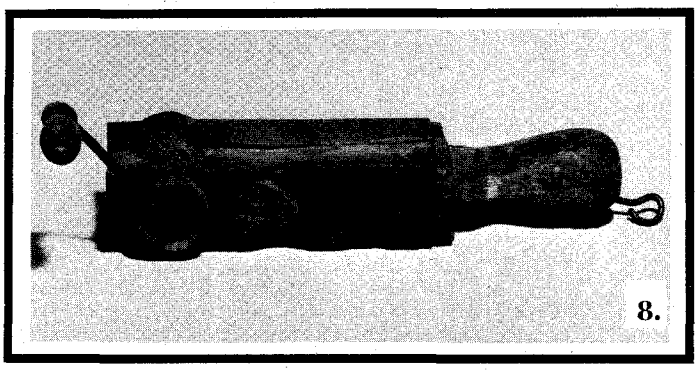

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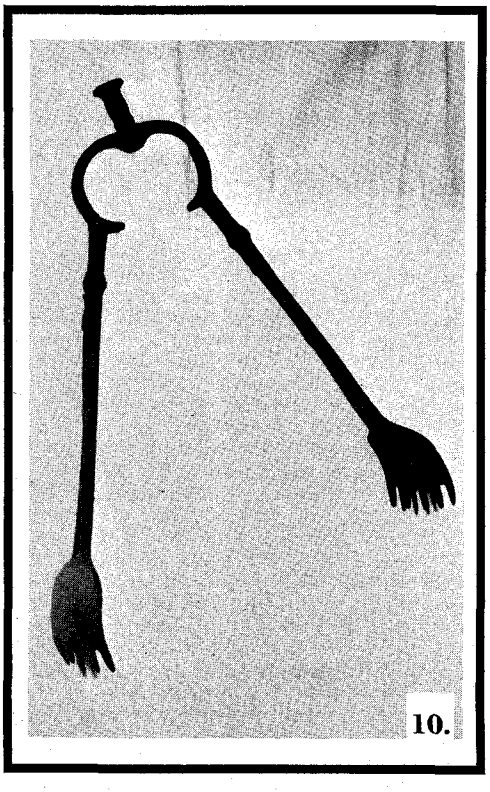

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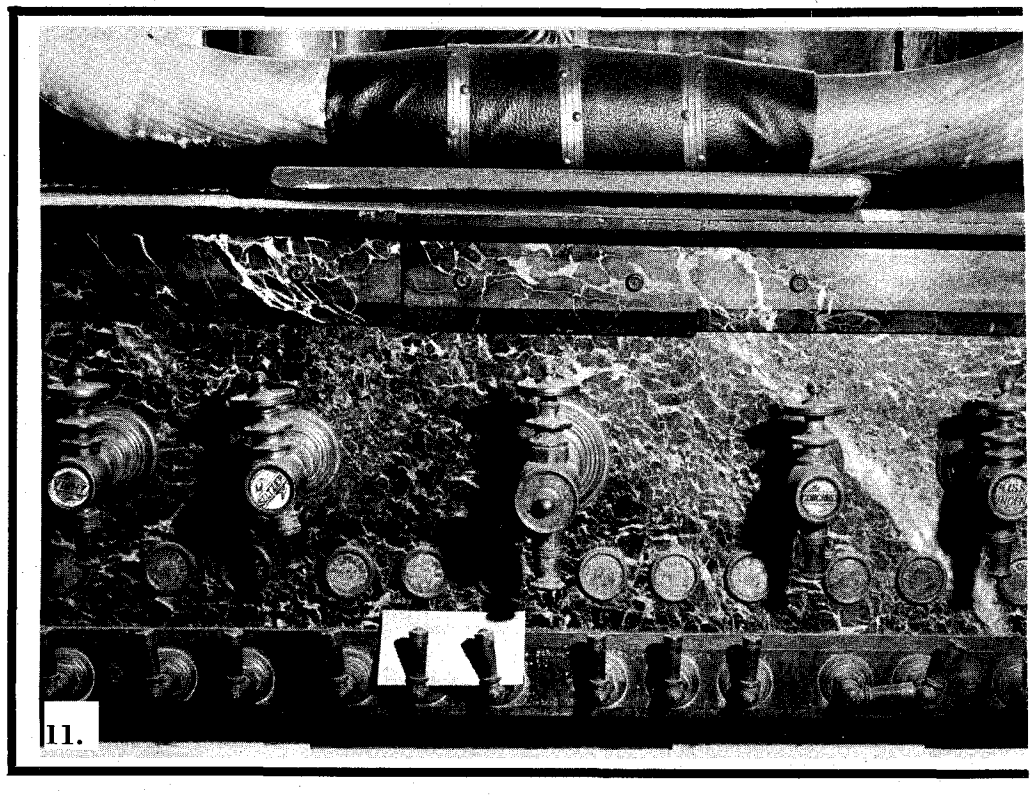

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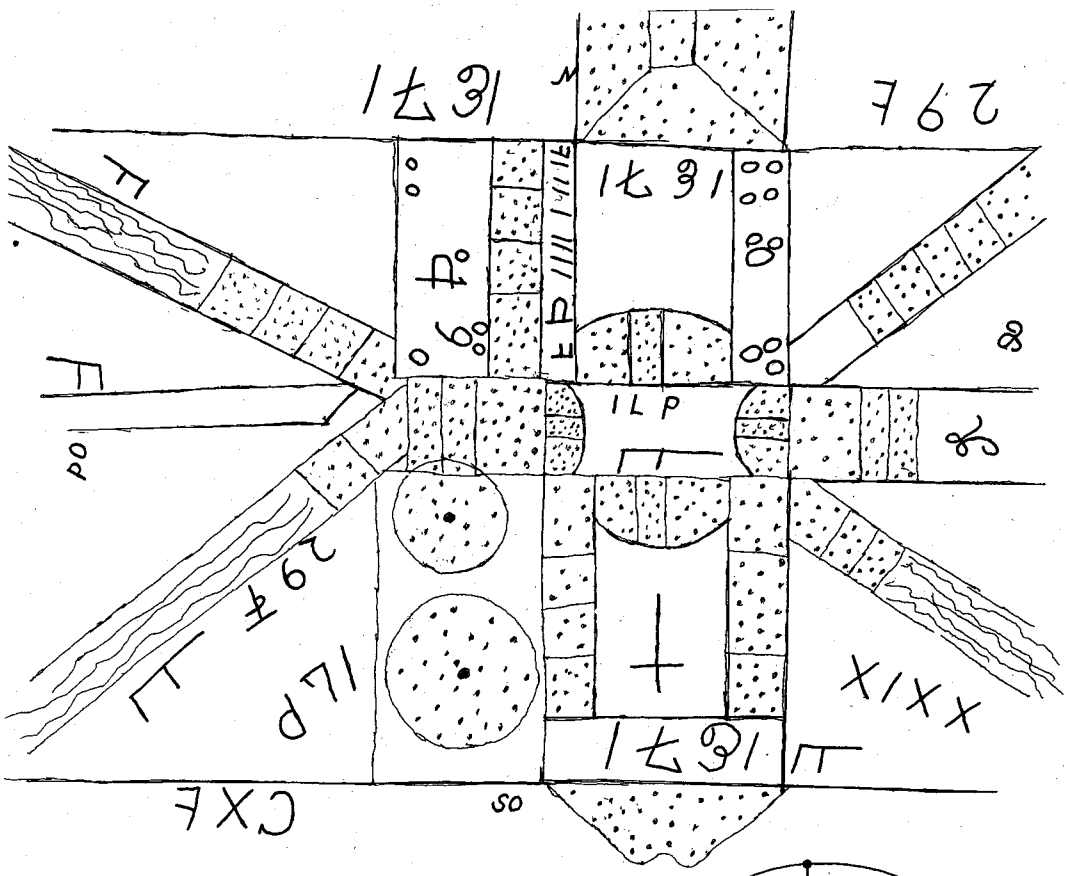
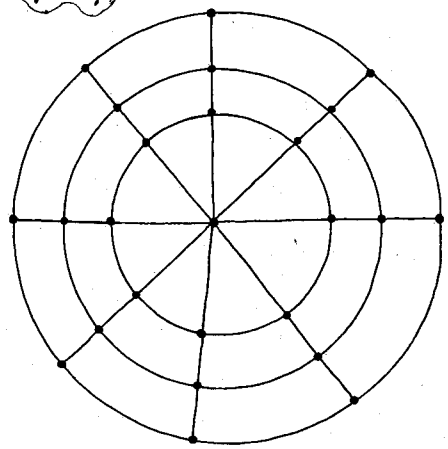
Mexican

By VERNE SEMS

Photos Courtesy Author





Author's sketch of the intricately carved side of the flat rock which, according to Arnold, was a map of an underground village at one time inhabited by Mexicans. Reverse side of the rock (at right) was interpreted as a pattern of above ground markings.

MY PARENTS, John and Lucretia Sems, moved from Oklahoma (then Indian Territory) in covered wagons about 1899, when I was a child. They bought a small ranch near Clyde, Callahan County, Texas.

At the extreme southern portion of the ranch was a plot we referred to as "the 80-acre piece." The soil was deep, loose white sand, covered with almost impenetrable underbrush and an occasional old oak tree. In fact this 80 acres was such wild country it seemed we were the first inhabitants on earth to explore it. And my mother did want to explore the new ranch.

One day she went into the 80-acre tract and came home with a strange story. She said she had found a pile of rocks with one large stone set up like the headstone of a grave. She thought this was most unusual because this was not rocky soil and there were no other rocks in the area. Possibly it was an Indian grave but there were no indications of others. Near this pile of rocks were three trees which apparently had been braided together when they were small, for they had grown into large trees still entwined.

About two years later, two men drove up to our house at dusk, in a buggy, and asked if they could spend the night. My parents never refused this request from any traveler so, of course, they stayed. The younger of the two, Sam Hart, was doing the driving for the older man, Dave Arnold, a big fat man in his seventies.

After dinner that night, our family and guests sat around an iron wood-heater talking. Mr. Arnold began asking questions about marks on trees and peculiar and unusual rock formations.

In the course of his conversation he asked if by chance anyone had found some "braided" trees near a large pile of rocks. My mother told him that she had discovered such a formation about two years before and felt sure that she would have no difficulty directing him to the place.

Mr. Arnold finally told my parents that he had lived in Mexico for a number of years, there learning to read old Spanish marks on trees and rocks that led to hidden and lost treasures. He added that he had followed a "line" from Mexico to our place. Mr. Arnold became so excited and so full of enthusiasm after he learned that my mother had found the braided trees and peculiar rock arrangement that he could hardly wait until morning to go and see for himself.

That night a heavy snow fell and it was impossible to do anything for nearly a week until the thaw. Arnold literally paced the floor with impatience.

Finally when the snow was nearly gone, the three of them—my mother, Dad, and Mr. Arnold—went to find the braided trees. Mother experienced no difficulty in locating them again. At the pile of rocks Arnold got down on his hands and knees, and very gently removed the top layer of sand by blowing it away so as not to disturb any of the stones for a fraction of an inch. Then he looked and sighted. He read marks and signs quickly as a flash, but the only information that he would divulge would be that "this" indicated so many *varas* east, north, south or west. All of his measurements were in *varas*.

After that first day of digging, exploring, following marks and signs, my parents came home as excited as Mr. Arnold. They felt sure that a hidden treasure was just within their reach.

Mr. Arnold explained to my parents that first he would have to find the plat rock which would direct them to the treasure and this rock was what he was looking for. Dad worked with him for approximately a week, Mr. Arnold being much too advanced in years and too heavy to do manual labor.

When Dad felt he had given as much of his time as he could spare away from his ranch work (he was busy clearing land, enlarging fields, and making other improvements on the ranch), our guest worked alone for a few days.

ABOUT DUSK one day we saw Mr. Arnold coming down the road in a half trot—as much as he could do because he was so fat. When he got near the house he began yelling, "John, I've found it! John, I've found it!"

My Dad stopped everything and returned with him. Mr. Arnold actually had located the plat rock but it had been buried for so many years that a large oak tree had grown over it. It was getting dark so they had to wait until the next day to proceed.

Removing the tree involved several hours' careful work because the stone was imbedded in the roots. It was buried two or three feet deep and preserved in a mass of pulverized oiled charcoal. The white sandstone was about an inch thick, a little over a foot long, and not quite a foot wide, with irregular edges. It was smooth and flat and beautifully carved on both sides. The side with the most intricate and complex carvings was facing down. Mr. Arnold stated this was because it represented a map of the underground work. The upper side of the stone with the circles and dots represented on-top-of-the-ground work—rock piles, marks on trees, lines, etc. that

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Bullion on the FLYING H BAR RANCH

Would you like to have a two-hundred-year-old fortune? Would you risk your life—and your wife—to get it? The "evil spirits" who guard it seem to have a particular affinity for the divorce courts!

The Sems family with author on her father's left

led to the treasure. These lines went for miles in all directions.

After the plat rock was cleaned, it was the most beautiful and most delicate carving in stone that I have ever seen. Everything down to the smallest detail was perfect. It was truly a magnificent work of art. Mr. Arnold carefully placed it on the table, then proceeded to read it for us. Our family of ten was grouped around him.

This happened so many years ago I cannot remember all the details but he told us this was a map of an underground village at one time inhabited by a colony of Mexicans. Due to violent and regular attacks by Indians they had abandoned the location with all their treasures sealed in different rooms, and then directed a flow of water over the whole. They had made a secret passage or long tunnel, so no one except those of their group would ever be able to avoid the water and reach the treasure.

The wavy lines in three corners on the stone indicated water. Twenty-nine feet marked on the stone, once in Roman numerals and twice in ordinary figures, indicated the depth of the water and this proved true. In every hole dug to a depth of twenty-nine feet, an abundance of water was found.

All of the complex sections marked off in squares represented rooms. The large room with the cross was their chapel. The dots in all the rooms represented the quantity of gold bullion. The long narrow space with an "F" and "P.O." at one end, with no dots in it, was a small hollowed-out groove in the stone. This, according to Mr. Arnold, indicated the secret passage or tunnel and the only entrance by which the underground village could be safely reached. But how were we to locate that tunnel? Mr. Arnold stated that according to the plat rock, there were many millions of dollars buried, in gold bullion. He read the date as 1731.

The braided trees were about one-quarter of a mile from where the plat rock was uncovered. Mr. Arnold traced the location of the stone through marks on trees and different rock pile formations. There were numerous and different marks on most of the old oak trees in the area. These marks were deep cuts and slashes through the bark, made in the trunks when the trees were very young.

Sometimes a mark would be a half circle, or a complete circle, or long straight lines. Or a cut might begin at the top of the tree, and wind around the trunk to the base where there would be a larger cut. This represented a snake, and the direction the head was turned was of great importance. But Mr. Arnold never divulged the meaning of many of these things. He would simply look, sight, and remark to my Dad, "so many *varas*, east, west, north or south and we will find such and such a thing."

After stepping off the *varas* in ground-devouring strides, he would come to still another sign or mark, or perhaps a rock pile. He would tell my dad to dig and he would find a certain type stone pointing down, or perhaps it would be pointing south, and he never failed to be correct. It was uncanny and almost unbelievable the way he could stand near a rock pile and tell you what you would find in there, and he could do it quickly. He read signs at a glance. My parents remarked later that he was like a hound dog on a scent when he found a mark on a tree or a sign in a rock pile.

In one such place where he asked my dad to dig, he unearthed a small stone possibly ten inches long and four or five inches across in the widest place. It was an almost perfect replica of a duck. After carefully removing the soil from around this stone, Mr. Arnold got down on his hands and knees, as was his custom, and looked and sighted. When he lifted the stone duck, there were three small round stones underneath which he called her eggs.

DIGGING BEGAN in earnest when the plat rock was unearthed. All of this entailed manual labor with pick and shovel, and my dad gave all the time he could spare away from his work on the ranch.

The plat rock was found in the northwest corner of this area. Two other larger flat white sandstones were found, one on the east and the other on the west, possibly seventy-five feet apart and each buried at a depth of two or three feet. Each was preserved in a mass of pulverized oiled charcoal. These latter stones had only one word each carved on them. As I remember, one word was "OESTE" and the other, "PUENTE." Buried with each of these stones was a small half-disc cut from a thin sheet of copper, straight on one side, with deep notches cut into the curve, each coming to a sharp point. Mr. Arnold called these discs the rising and setting sun.

In the center between the two stones was found a beautiful dagger cut from a thin sheet of copper, also buried and preserved in the same type of pulverized oiled charcoal. This dagger was about six inches long. On the blade were the letters, "I.L.P.", formed by minute dots which apparently had been pricked into the metal with a sharp pointed instrument. They sparkled like pure gold. This dagger was buried with the blade pointing down. This, the men decided, meant to dig deeper, which they did, and at four or five feet, they hit yellow clay. But this clay looked different—it was smooth as glass and the other soil peeled off from around it.

Mr. Arnold supervised all the digging, and all the soil around the clay was carefully removed. They found a perfectly arched doorway, about two feet wide and possibly five feet high. The yellow clay forming the arch looked as if it had been wet and "slicked down" with their hands. This arched doorway, filled with pure white sand, unfortunately was com-

(Continued on page 66)

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Cowboys in Town

By JERRY ARMSTRONG

Photos Courtesy Denver Public Library Western Collection

Thad Sowder

AROUND THE TURN of the century the greatest bucking horse contest in the country was the annual Mountain and Plain Festival ride in Denver. In the days preceding an opening performance of the tournament, top bronc riders from all sections of the cow country, and the pick of bucking horses from ranch rough-strings and the vast ranges of Wyoming and Colorado, converged on the Mile High City.

The annual Mountain and Plain Festival winner was awarded an ornate bejeweled trophy belt and buckle, along with a sizeable amount of prize money. The possessor of this coveted belt and buckle was generally recognized as the world's champion bucking horse rider of the year. The champion had to return to the following year's Festival and there defend, against all comers, his right to the belt.

Official headquarters for the Festival of Mountain and Plain were at the Brown Palace Hotel, with a second, less pretentious headquarters and hangout for the cowboys set up in a vacant store, close to the arena on Curtis Street. Sixty-seven riders were on hand for the scheduled three-day 1902 contest. The man to beat was defending champion Thad Sowder, a rough-string riding cowboy from Wyoming.

Two years earlier Sowder had won the saddle bronc riding at Cheyenne's famed Frontier Days rodeo. After that notable victory he had been invited to join the touring Buffalo Bill Wild West Show. In the fall of 1901, Thad left the show and entrained for Denver to compete in the Mountain and Plain Festival contest. He came up the winner and in impressive arena ceremonies had been officially presented with the coveted championship belt and buckle. Now he was back to defend his title.

The clean cut Thad Sowder was a quiet "yep" and "nope" cowboy, a type later to become all too familiar to western movie fans and novel readers. But the strong silent one—in real life—is not exactly typical. At the Curtis Street headquarters, Sowder remained in the background while other cowboys expounded about the rank horses they had ridden, the injuries they had survived, and the riding contests they had won.

John Kuykendall, festival manager

Because he was such a shy, country-style, nice guy, people were inclined to forget what a great bronc rider Sowder really was. Taller and more swash-buckling cowboys from afar, often with a quart of bourbon under their belts, would spin wild yarns of doings in Texas and Montana and in the faraway provinces of western Canada. Awed listeners would concede that these mighty men would put young Sowder to shame.

One of the mightiest of the mighty riders from afar was the loquacious Tom Minor who had arrived in Denver from Idaho. Minor averred that he had ridden horses that Sowder couldn't put a saddle on. When wagers were being made on the outcome of the riding contest, there was a scarcity of Sowder money in evidence.

The 1902 event was to have five contest judges. One of the selected five was a prominent Wyoming rancher for whom Sowder had once worked cattle. In the Brown Palace lobby, which had taken on a cattlemens' convention appearance, this judge openly stated that Thad Sowder was no bronc rider, that he never had been, and never would be. He was lucky, the rancher-judge went on, to have won the contest the previous year; this time, he didn't have a chance.

The champion overheard, or was informed, of the judge's statements. He contacted Festival manager John Kuykendall to ascertain what chance he had of receiving unbiased judging for his efforts in the current meet. Kuykendall assured the concerned Sowder that, in spite of his derogatory talk, the Wyoming rancher would be an able and honest judge and that, as always, the contest would be decided fairly with the better man the winner.

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The 1902 Mountain and Plain Festival was a memorable one. Why? Thad Sowder came to win—and a formidable array of riders decided to change those plans

"All you have to do to win," said Kuykendall, "is to outride the others."

"If I get a good horse," retorted Sowder, "I think I can do that."

"The champion rider is entitled to a champion horse," Kuykendall reminded him, "and we have that one reserved for you."

THE FIRST two days, fifty-seven of the sixty-five challenging riders were disqualified. On the third day, five of the remaining nine riders managed to rack up qualifying rides on their rowdy mounts. The five successful riders were Harry Brennan, Luther Dennison, Benjamin Franklin Stone, Tom Minor and Jack McGuire.

The judges then ruled that only the high marked rider was to compete against Sowder for the title. This ruling resulted in no little confusion when it came to light that there was no single high marked rider—the judges' charts had five riders in a five-way tie. The tied score riders, all anxious for a chance to ride against Sowder for the title, griped long and loudly. The judges then, in an appeasement gesture, left the final choice in the hands of the five challengers with the stipulation that their choice was subject to approval by the judges.

After much ado, McGuire, Dennison, and Stone nominated wild-riding Harry Brennan of Sheridan, Wyoming, as the one to get the chance to ride against Sowder. Brennan, however, said, "No, Old Iron Horse (Stone) should ride."

Stone shook his head. "Harry, I can ride any horse that you can, but not like you ride 'em."

The cowboys argued, and then Tom Minor took over. He had, he said, promised the home folks in Shoshone, Idaho, that on his return he would be wearing the championship belt. He had made that promise, he said, and he intended to keep it. When the five cowboys came out of their huddle, the elected rider was Tom Minor. The choice met with the unanimous approval of the judges.

In the two man ride-off for the title, the champion rode first and, as promised by manager Kuykendall, his mount was an equine champion, the mighty Steamboat. This was the most famous bucking horse of his time. Steamboat was gentle to handle and stood quietly while Sowder placed and cinched on his saddle. Several thousand pairs of eyes watched the cowboy's every move, and even the vendors in the stands were, for the moment, silent.

Harry Brennan walked out into the arena. "Thad," he said, "I've studied Steamboat for I figured that I would someday get him in the draw. He is fast and hits the ground hard, but he is a straightaway bucker. When he does turn, it is always a left turn."

"Thanks, Harry," said Sowder. He then put his left foot in the stirrup, a hand on the horn and swung with ease and grace into the saddle.

Steamboat was turned loose from the snubbing horse and instantly erupted into action. He bucked high and hard and very fast, and all the while a peculiar sound, somewhat similar to the whistle of a river steamboat, was emitted from his oversize nostrils. At the end of the long arena, the horse ducked and turned—to the left—and now he was really firing. This was a three-minute, not a ten-second performance, as is the rule in rodeo today, and all the way this was a spectacular ride.

Tom Minor's final mount, Wampus Cat, usually a wicked bucker, this time crow-hopped some thirty yards and then quit. Minor was given a reride mount, then another and another. He rode eight horses, one after another, and none of them really bucked hard.

"These are all dead ones," he complained to the judges. "Haven't you a horse here that can buck?"

The judges gathered together. "What is wrong with Minor's horses?" one asked. "I know they are all good proven broncs, but they just don't act like it when Minor is aboard. Has he or someone else doped them?"

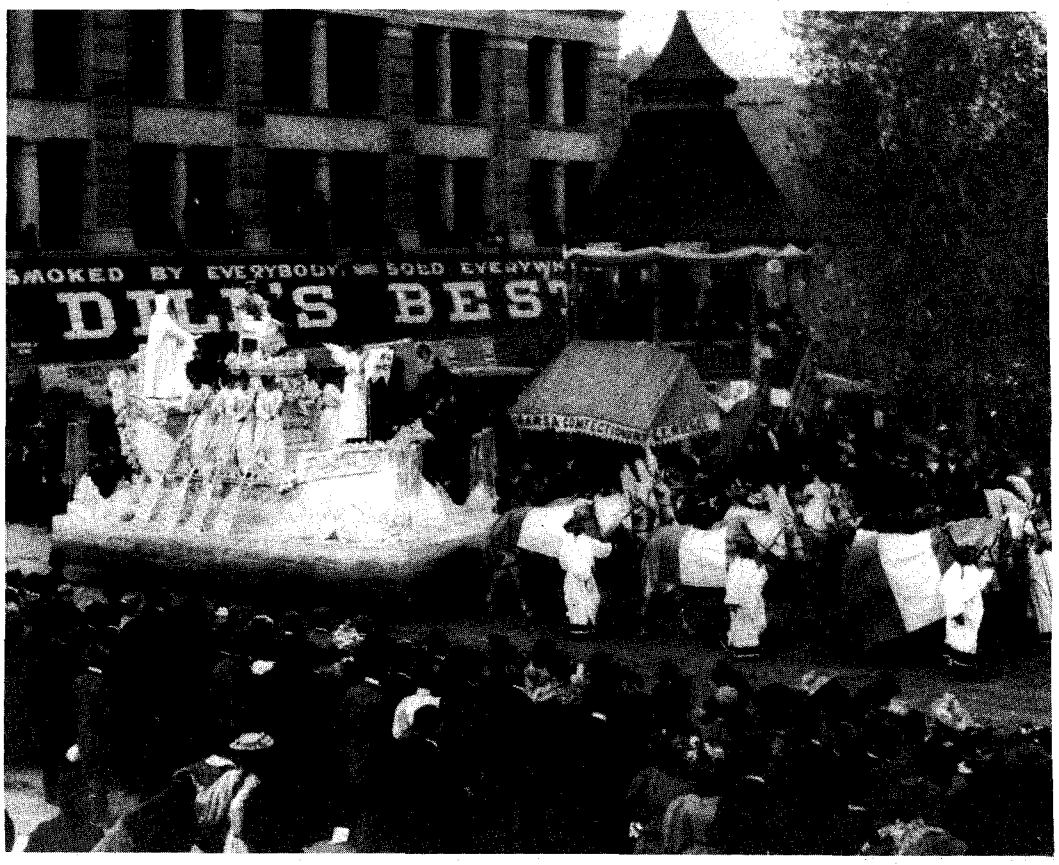
"No," a second judge replied, "it's muscle, not dope. Minor cinches his horses in two and then holds up their heads. Let's give him old Dead Easy." The other judges all agreed that Dead Easy was the perfect test mount for the strong-armed Idaho cowboy.

Thomas Minor—from a picture that appeared in the October 10, 1902 *Rocky Mountain News*

The notorious Dead Easy had been shipped to Denver from Cheyenne by rancher John C. Coble. A young Wyoming rough-string rider with a wide rep had long before mounted this uncurried old outlaw. The horse had walked and then trotted around the corral. "This horse is dead easy to ride," the youngster shouted to observers. At that moment the rank one dropped his head and went into ac-

(Continued on page 47)

The float below appeared in the parade which was a part of the 1899 Mountain and Plain Festival.



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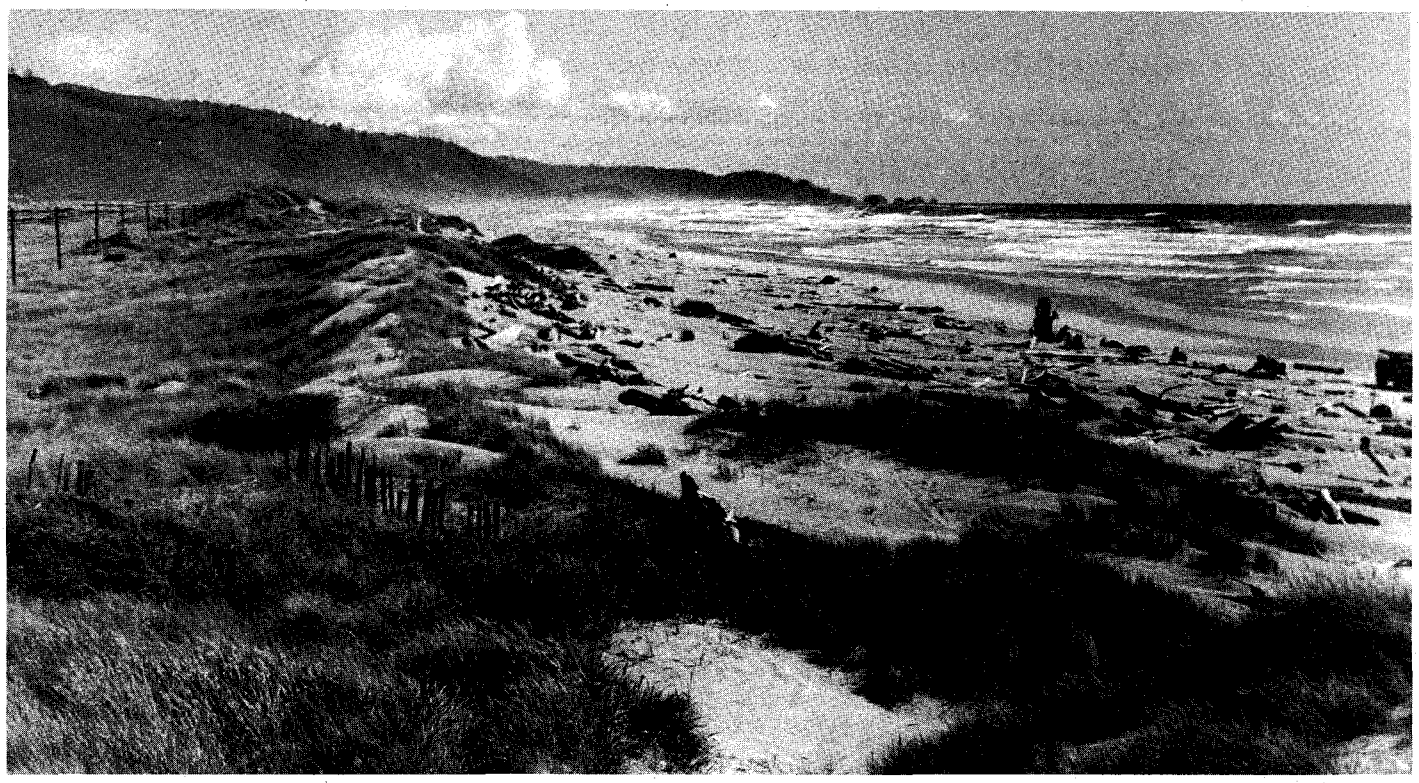

Desolate Nehalem Peninsula where tons of wax have been recovered

Messages in Beeswax from a Missing Galleon

For over a century white men have been tantalized by what washes ashore at the mouth of the Nehalem River. Does this spot on the Pacific mark the final destination of the *San Francisco Xavier*?

BEESWAX that defies both time and tide has been a mystery of the Pacific for about 150 years. When Alexander Henry was a fur trader at Astoria back in 1814, Indians were digging chunks of wax from beach sands near the mouth of the Nehalem River in the primitive Oregon Country. They lugged loads of the stuff over terrifying trails, crisscrossing rugged Mt. Neah-Kah-Nie for trade with Henry. He, too, was curious about the origin of this beeswax and concluded that it must have come from wreckage of a Spanish vessel lost long before his time.

About 100 years later, a professor at the University of Oregon devoted scientific consideration to the Nehalem wax. He mentioned that it had long been an enigma to the theorizing antiquarian, a despair to the sordid promoter, and a solace for the space writer. Only recently a block bearing the numerals "67" was subjected to the Carbon-14 test to determine its age. This wax was formed in 1681.

Early settlers in the Nehalem country went to the site where the wax was usually found and observed vestiges of a very old wreck. There they started plowing. This surface operation yielded 450 pounds of wax. Soon a fellow came who staked himself a beeswax claim and before his digging petered out he had uncovered about three tons.

Diggers discovered wax in strange and varied shapes. Some of the larger cakes weighed up to forty pounds and were in the shape of parallelograms. On many cakes appeared deeply incised letters and symbols. One well preserved piece bore a perfect capital N nearly five inches in length and surmounted by a smaller, neatly inscribed diamond. Other pieces carried combinations of letters such as INS and IHN. These symbols were marks of identification to the consignee in Mexico. Antiquarians suggested that INS was an abbreviation for In Hoc Nomen, good church Latin for "In His Name." Also unearthed were a few entire tapers and many broken ones, both large and small. These were burned in the Spanish colonial churches of America. A very few contained fragments of rotted wick. Religious images could also be created in the pliable beeswax.

Mrs. Helen Smith, schooled daughter of a Clatsop Indian chief, told an impressive story about the beeswax ship. She had collected and critically sifted tribal traditions for reliable historical information. She concluded that a score or more had survived the wreck of the beeswax ship and briefly had lived among the natives. But they imprudently meddled with marital relationships and were soon slain to the last seducer. Mrs. Smith concluded that the disastrous wreck occurred between 1700 and 1710.

Oregon's beeswax mystery inevitably became a remunerative theme for "thrill" writers. Into their beeswax stories they wove a web of buried treasure, piracy and affairs of the heart. One legend told of a chest of treasure removed from the wreckage and buried upon or near Mt. Neah-Kah-Nie that overlooks the sea. The story relates that a Kaffir slave was slain above the buried treasure to discourage superstitious Indians from plundering the cached wealth.

No man is known to have found Nehalem's legendary treasure. Early seekers came to dig with picks and shovels. Modern treasure hunters bring bulldozers and power machinery.

A SPECIMEN of the Nehalem wax was displayed at the World's Columbian Exposition at Chicago in 1893. There an exalted commissioner examined the piece and declared it was not beeswax at all.

"What is it then?" asked an Oregonian who had seen the old candles, knew that the stuff smelled like beeswax when melted, and used the stuff to toughen

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By BEN MAXWELL

Photos Courtesy Author

thread used in sewing and cobbling.

"Why, it's ozokerite, a paraffin wax," explained the commissioner.

Finally someone produced a specimen of the Nehalem wax with a long dead bee embedded in it. Then a chemist demonstrated that the specimen had the precise melting point of beeswax, a characteristic of no other wax.

But there remained a hard core of ozokerite resistance. To ozokerites the wax suggested oil deposits. And a bountiful oil well is just what they wanted. About 1910 a derrick was erected near the site of the old wax deposit and drilling for oil started with publicity and a hurrah. Funds soon became depleted with no oil discovered. Disenchanted investors wanted to hear no more about ozokerite, beeswax, paraffin wax or any other kind of wax.

Beeswax fans have lately been enlightened by William Lytle Schurz's *Manila Galleon,* a monumental contribution by a specialist in Spanish colonial enterprise, which required twenty-seven years of research for its preparation. The *Manila Galleon* is concerned with the Spanish monopoly of trade between Acapulco in Mexico and Manila in the Phillippines. It flourished over an interval of 250 years, between 1565 and 1815.

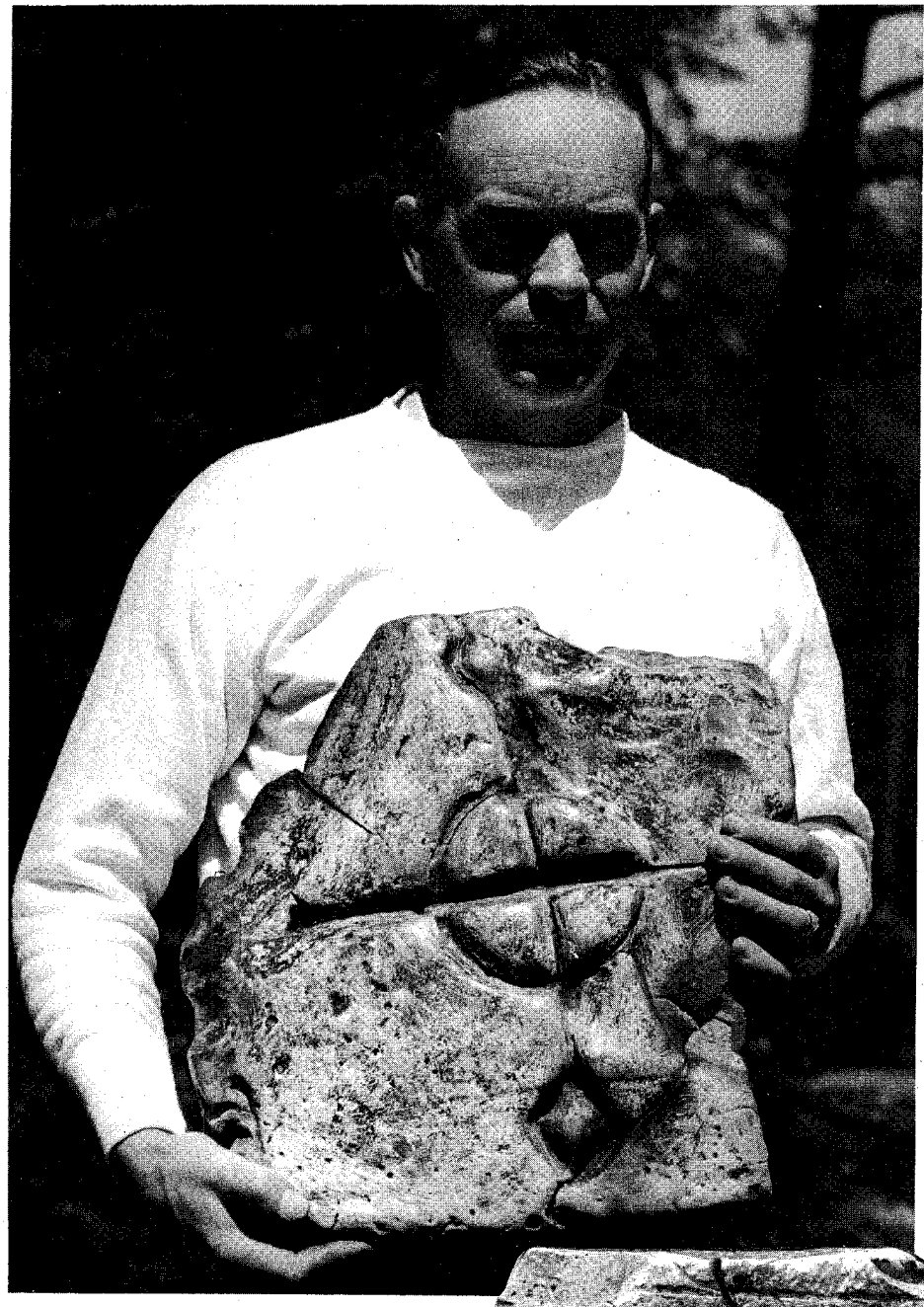
No other transportation line known to history endured for so long. No other commercial route familiar to navigation was so remote or undertook a voyage so long, so tedious or more dreadfully perilous. Average duration of the easterly crossing was seven months at sea on a galleon that was always crowded, lacked refrigeration, sanitation, medical attention or a wholesome supply of food.

Schurz introduces his readers to Dr. John Francis Gemelli-Careri, an Italian gadabout of fortune who ventured the easterly voyage on the galleon *San Francisco Xavier,* sailing from Manila in 1697.

The *San Francisco Xavier* was overloaded and inspectors came aboard and ordered bales of merchandise and packages of beeswax, a deck cargo, taken ashore to lighten the vessel. When the galleon sailed on May 22, 1697, 200 persons were aboard. After a voyage of 204 days and 5 hours, those who were yet alive arrived at Acapulco.

Gemelli-Careri relates that after five months at sea the galleon was a hungry, plagued and stinking charnel ship. Scurvy and beriberi were rampant. Many had already died. Little vermin, called *gorgojos* by the Spaniards, swarmed over the galleon and ultimately fastened themselves upon human bodies to fatten. An abundance of flies fell into the broth in which swam worms of various sorts. In every mouthful of food, declared Gemelli-Careri, went down an abundance of maggots and *gorgojos,* chewed and bruised.

Cape Mendicino in northern California, the first American landfall for the galleons, was a region of great storms and diverse ocean currents. The galleons *Espiritu Santo* and *Jesus Maria* were nearly lost in this turbulent locality in 1604. Strong ocean currents which drift northern California redwood against the Oregon coast could easily have carried a helpless Manila galleon to the Nehalem beach.



Waldemar H. Hollenstead of Portland holds a block of beeswax which he found. The cryptic symbol suggests the specimen may have been shipped by church interests. A Carbon-14 test of the specimen at right indicates that it was formed in 1681.

Again, in 1705, the *San Francisco Xavier,* now old and ocean worn, sailed from Manila. She was not again seen or ever officially accounted for; it cannot be doubted that beeswax was again deck cargo.

From Manzanita Beach along the Oregon coast, it is a pleasant walk to a site where beeswax was once found in abundance. Now but little is found there. Over this brooding region of low, windswept dunes and driftwood is a remoteness that challenges exploration and inspires the imagination to dream of buried treasure. Certainly it was a day of violence—of awesome tragedy—when the beeswax deposit sank near the mouth of the Nehalem River centuries ago.

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Gold Canyon

(Continued from page 9)

Gold Canyon. He and an elderly son, Hosteen Chi, often discussed the canyon with me, relating everything they knew except the exact location.

Zon Kelli had several educated sons who often tried to worm the secret from him. Then a few years before he died at age 104 in the Tuba City hospital, he gave the secret into the keeping of the uneducated one, my long-time friend, Hosteen Chi.

Hosteen Chi visited Gold Canyon three or four times. He kept telling me that some day we must go there together. He got no encouragement in this because I never aspired to make a hard ride that would take a week just going there and back. Lost mines never interested me regardless of how authentic a few may be, as in this case.

Before Pearl Harbor, two Flagstaff brothers, Joe and Frank Samsky, moved mining equipment onto Ashley Bar in the Colorado River above Lee Ferry. They hoped to recover flour gold from the sand, which soon proved impossible.

Hosteen Chi, visiting a friend on the rim of Glen Canyon, looked over and saw them at work. Jumping on his horse he did not slack rein until reaching the trading post. He arrived at midnight and insisted on talking it over at once.

"The white men can't help but find it!" he declared.

Ashley Bar proved easy to locate on a detailed map. But from the way he described Gold Canyon I couldn't begin to estimate the distance they were apart. On his continued insistence, I agreed to go with him to Gold Canyon, and we took off.

Instead of riding three days getting there, it took us four. Then another day was spent cutting logs long enough to bridge a chasm to gain the way down. Following a shallow spring-fed stream we rode toward the river, into the canyon's widest part. The mouth is almost blocked solid. From the river side there is little evidence of an existing canyon. The Samsky brothers couldn't have found it had they been right up against it. Where the walls curved back we found chiseled inscriptions on both sides. In addition to the 1661 date, there was another. What had not been obliterated by sandstones read plainly, ".....de Julio 1796." This fitted no part of the facts I ever heard.

Merrick and Mitchell had cut their names once and the date, 1881. They erected four pyramids of stones. Inside each had been deposited a tin can containing location notices. I could just about read their penciled scribbling before the paper disintegrated on contact with air.

Ridges and small hummocks marked the canyon floor. The surface appeared undisturbed by man. Going along the base of one wall Hosteen Chi pointed to a small "X."

"The gold is under here," he said.

He located the silver lode 400 yards downstream. We spent five days digging to the ore in each. The holes had been filled with rock as well as sand, by his father and uncle. In the bottom was a tunnel leading under the canyon wall following the horizontal ledge of purple tinted quartz that once showed on the surface. The same quartz can be found in Navajo Canyon but has no gold in it that I ever heard of.

The gold in the tunnel vein, fourteen inches wide, was largely of the wire type, although we found a few large pieces that broke free. We made only a shallow dig to the silver lode. In contrast to the other, it is vertical and only ten inches wide. Concentrating on the gold we beat off and picked out enough to fill our saddle bags and then covered everything over again. After we returned to the trading post, we drove to Flagstaff. A long-time friend, Ira Hart, a bank manager, sent the gold to a smelter which was obliged to sell it to the Government. In about six weeks Hosteen Chi received a check for $964.

MEANWHILE we encountered some trouble. Intending to make legal claim for Hosteen Chi, we obtained printed notices from the country recorder. Then we visited another friend of mine, Attorney C. B. Wilson. He informed us of new restrictions regarding claims on Indian lands, even applicable to a Navajo. We held up returning to Gold Canyon to post notices until communicating with the Commissioner of Indian Affairs in Washington. Surely he could give us the straight information on technicalities, and fight for Hosteen Chi's cause. The blow fell when we received his reply, although he personally sounded enthusiastic about a Navajo's benefiting from the claim.

He wrote that, on evaluation, a private company probably would be given the job of operating the mine on contract. Certain heavy percentages must also be paid to others, one to the Navajo Tribe and the largest to Utah, if within that State. It was. And their part would amount to a hefty 37½ per cent. This came through the retention of some mineral rights when Utah agreed to the extension of the Navajo Reservation from the Arizona-Utah border to the San Juan River.

Hosteen Chi, who could handle mathematics in his head as fast as I could on paper, concluded quickly he would get nothing or very little from the mine.

He said sadly, "There won't be anything left. Let the matter drop."

The area was not inhabited by a single family. When I suggested he and his several sons slip into Gold Canyon and bring out gold from time to time, he shook his head.

"Before long, people would guess where our wealth came from and we would be in trouble. The canyon is cursed by the spirits of many dead men. No good has ever come of it and none will."

So far as I know he never brought any more gold out. The war years intervened and took me out of the western Navajo country until 1946. When I came back Hosteen Chi had ridden the Last Trail.

There was a time when anyone could have easily located Gold Canyon. There are four outstanding landmarks in the area, visible as far as seventy-five miles distant. A line drawn on a map or merely an imaginary one between each will do it nicely. The first extends from white cliffs on the southwest corner of Navajo Mountain above Willow Springs, due west to a peak on the Colorado River Canyon rim. The second must be made from a huge natural monument slightly south of west from Navajo Mountain shown on maps as Tower Butte but called Poverty Butte by the Navajo. This line passes north to Navajo Point at the end of Kaiparowits Plateau across the river. Directly under where the two lines cross lies Gold Canyon.

This is part of the secret of why John and Robert Merrick needed no map to get there. I doubt they even used a compass, let alone realized that the first line follows exactly the 37th degree parallel.

Surrounding Gold Canyon is a mass of others, almost side by side. The space between them consists of eroded, jam-packed slick rocks of every description. They vary from a few yards in diameter to the size of two-story buildings. These weird formations provide the toughest and worst place existing to get in and out of. The final jump-off is around a huge stone dome. Behind it lies what seems to be a bottomless chasm ten feet across in the most narrow place. The flat rim of Gold Canyon appears just beyond.

Probably many prospectors actually got this far in years gone by. The tough problem of getting across the chasm stopped them. For likely each said to himself, why not go around the dome and the mesa-like mass abutting it to the other side of the canyon? This is a blind. If and when he did, he entered an entirely different canyon.

Crossing the chasm is the secret the Merricks knew. It has to be bridged with logs which are found at some distance from the crossing site. Hosteen Chi and I did this and, on leaving, lifted the ends to let them disappear into the chasm. It is what all before us did, too.

The Gold Canyon Mine took the lives of a large number of men. Not counting Hosteen Chi's small check, no one ever got anything out of it and no one ever will—because Lake Powell now covers it to a depth of 250 feet.

Jack Morrow—Road Rancher

(Continued from page 19)

helping to make him a rich man in a short time.

An easy source of revenue was a stand of large cedar trees in the canyons, especially from one now known as Moran Canyon, on the south side of the Platte. By his arrogance and threats and with the help of his Sioux, Morrow kept other cutters out of these cedars. He cut great numbers of logs, using all that he wanted to build his ranch setup, and delivering thousands of others on contract for telegraph poles.

Jack bartered with the Indians for furs and buffalo robes, storing them in large quantities for his annual trading trip to Omaha. These, with beef and buffalo meat (also secured by barter), filled a long caravan of freight wagons—an impressive sight, and one which gave Morrow an opportunity to swagger and boast when he disposed of his wares in the city.

As railroad construction progressed across the Plains, Jack Morrow secured contracts for hundreds of thousands of railroad ties and great quantities of cordwood. He knew the good stands of timber. His ads for woodcutters and for ties to be delivered at the tracks were carried by the Cheyenne and Laramie newspapers and *The Frontier Index*. His contracts with the railroad involved many thousands of dollars and later he delighted in bragging of his overcharging and shortcounting. Ties and cordwood were measured in piles and a practice called "cribbing" consisted of piling them with a hollow center, an easy way to cheat.

Morrow's mule and freight trains provided still further opportunity for swindling on freight shipments. He oper-

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Sioux teepees at North Platte, Nebraska

ated these trains mainly between Salt Lake City and Laramie.

Another of his activities in Wyoming Territory was managing a coal mine near Black Buttes. As an example of his foresight, he was one of the first to realize the potential in surface coal deposits which so easily could be mined. Lack of transportation was the only drawback but he was ready with a mine in operation when the railroad reached the Buttes.

AS THE YEARS passed, Morrow's interests were scattered over a wide area. Junction Ranch was left more and more to the management of his foreman Hewey (Hugh) Morgan, who was for years his righthand man.

It appears that Morgan did not approve of Morrow's treatment of the emigrants but for some reason his disapproval never reached the point of giving up a good job. He was a very capable man who must have had some previous business experience. Besides handling work as foreman, he was able to keep the books and take care of sales, not only for the ranch, but for all Jack's other enterprises as well. Morrow put such unlimited trust in Morgan that some contemporaries thought they were partners. That point has not been established but at any rate he was a very valuable man who took over the entire responsibility for everything whenever Morrow was on one of his drunken sprees or in a prolonged poker session.

With all his ruthlessness and arrogance, Morrow must have had some pleasing facets to his personality. Otherwise, not even a large salary could have kept Morgan loyal so many years. The brothers Fred and Leigh Freeman, editors of *The Frontier Index*, famous "Press on Wheels" of railroad construction days, called him 'that South Platte frontiersman and jolly Westerner." The Freemans had a bold policy toward crime and criminals, publishing facts without pulling punches, but Morrow's transgressions were too obscure to make sensational news. Besides he did a lot of advertising in the *Index*.

Fort McPherson was about fifteen miles from Junction Ranch. The commander of the post was Eugene Ware who related in his book, *The Indian Wars of 1864*, an experience with Jack Morrow. Ware and the other officers at the fort were invited to dinner at Junction Ranch. As they passed Sioux Lookout they could see an Indian scout watching them from the peak.

Shortly after, Morrow and Morgan welcomed them with tincups full of champagne which were replenished all during their stay. Dinner featured delicacies of the Plains—broiled antelope heart, baked buffalo humps and fried beaver tails. A young man from a neighboring ranch had been invited to entertain the guests with poetry and impersonations. The Sioux name he was known by indicated he was a squawman but years later Ware encountered him again in Ohio where he had become a prominent minister.

Comparing notes later, the army men realized their invitation had had an ulterior motive. Each had been asked to use his influence to help Morrow secure a government contract for shelled corn for the cavalry mounts.

Sleeping huts at Junction Ranch were rented to travelers for overnight stops. They were called Pilgrim's Quarters and brought a high price for the privilege of sleeping under a roof. There was also sleeping space in the upper story of the ranch house proper. This floor, up under the roof, was partitioned into rooms but no door had been cut through the cross logs. These rooms were often filled, even though getting into them meant a climb over six feet of log wall. The treatment travelers often received at Junction Ranch constantly brought on quarrels between Morrow and the freighters, wagon bosses, stage drivers and emigrants. Although the ranch was appreciated as an accomodation, especially in extremity, it was no place to linger.

The strongly built house was a boon to neighboring ranchers during the Cheyenne War of 1864 when the Indians attacked numbers of ranches in the valley, looted and burned, and killed settlers unable to escape. Junction Ranch was easily fortified by the ranchers who gathered there during the scare. All the Sioux tribes were drawn into the conflict except some of the Oglalas, who also found refuge at the ranch. That it was not attacked was probably due to Morrow's being a squawman and because a large number of Sioux considered him their benefactor.

AFTER SOME YEARS, Morrow's Indian wife died. (One early writer said he had several.) At any rate he then married a white woman. Very few people knew either of these women and so far as is known, he had no children. At least none bore his name. His white wife was described by a visitor at the ranch as being refined, modest, neatly dressed and seeming rather out of place. What became of her is unknown, but in 1875 Morrow married again.

Apparently the other ranchers on the Platte were willing to accept Jack for his good qualities and discount the bad ones since it was necessary to get along with one's neighbors for mutual benefit. Perhaps his prosperity had some bearing on his election as one of the three County Commissioners of Lincoln County, Nebraska Territory, in 1866. The following year Hugh Morgan was elected County Treasurer.

In the late 1860s, Morrow retired from the rugged life of the Plains to what was considered a luxurious home in Omaha. There he concentrated on government contracts and general speculation. Jack's brazen arrogance never failed him and his wealth continued to grow through his contracts and poker games. He bragged about his various swindles and his best story concerned the poker game in which he won $60,000 from a committee sent out from Washington to investigate irregularities in government contracts.

When he retired to Omaha from Junction Ranch, Jack Morrow did not divorce himself entirely from road ranching, for in 1870 he set up a small one northwest of Omaha. It was known as Morrow's Sixteen Mile Ranch. A good day's travel from Omaha, it was the first stopover on the Overland Stage route on the way west over the Military Road to Salt Lake City.

Guests at Sixteen Mile Ranch often met with difficulties typical of Morrow's trickery but they were less serious in nature than those that befell guests at Junction Ranch. Many a traveler found his horse lame in the morning when he was ready to leave. A horsehair tied tightly around a hock would stop circulation enough to insure a limp, and was hard to detect. If the owner had never heard of this common trick, was eager to get on West, he would buy a sound horse from the ranch, no doubt one that had been left behind, lame, by another unfortunate.

The land at Sixteen Mile Ranch was purchased by Morrow in two pieces: 280 acres in 1870 for $4,000; and 40 acres the following year for $500. For ten years the land was involved in one legal tangle after another. During this time it was deeded over to Hugh Morgan for less than half the purchase price, in a deal that seems to have been designed to save Morrow's hide in a lawsuit.

After the title had been cleared in court for Senator Millard, the land was again sold to Colonel Pratt, two men who figured in Nebraska history. Pratt named it Summer Hill Farm. Today it is still Summer Hill Farm, the picturesque but modern home of Wayland Ma-

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gee and his son, large scale cattle feeders and raisers of purebred swine. A part of the original house built by Jack Morrow when it was Sixteen Mile Ranch stood until 1963. For many years, until it was struck by lightning, a lone cottonwood tree which had been used to dispatch a horse thief, stood in a pasture.

In time, interest in Sixteen Mile Ranch began to wane and much of Jack's time was spent in the gambling places in Omaha. In the 1860s open gambling was still tolerated there with the payment of a token fine now and then. The two rooms run by Stuttering Brown and Dan Allen, where Jack had spent idle time when he was freighting out of Omaha, were less attractive now that he was accepted in a more elegant and genteel establishment run by Matt Harris. Here, still the arrogant bluffer, he mingled with "high society" and there is a story of a scene he created when he lost $3,000 at poker while he was intoxicated.

Morrow pulled his six-shooter and accused the dealer, Harris, of cheating, demanding his money back. Harris counted out the money and let Morrow pocket it, then invited him to have a drink. Jack accepted.

Harris quickly stepped into the next room, reappeared with two guns in his hands and told Morrow to put his gun and the money on the table. All the red-faced Morrow could do was burst into a loud guffaw and declare he was only joking anyway. But Harris kept Jack's gun and told him to come back for it the next day when he was sober.

Living at ease in Omaha, Jack Morrow's wealth began to disappear through dissipation faster than he could replace it from speculation and road ranching, and gradually he lost his properties. The shirts, soiled again, no longer flashed the big diamond stud. Came the year 1885. Morrow was probably not more than fifty-five years old when the rugged constitution which had survived the abuses of many active years on the Plains gave way. The notorious rogue, Jack Morrow, thief and swindler, died in poverty.

Oregon's Buried Treasures

(Continued from page 25)

er, he buried his gold between the two on the west side, only a few feet from the creek itself.

One thing he had not foreseen in choosing this location was a possible flood. Shortly after he put the can in the ground, Birch Creek became a raging torrent destroying everything in its path. After the water had subsided, Mr. Baker discovered that the rock marker on the west bank had either washed away or had been covered with mud. He was never able to locate the can with the gold coins again.

When I talked with his son, Bill Baker, who lives on the same place, he told me that the tree marker on the east bank had only in recent years been cut down. He said if I wished to conduct a search with a metal locater, he would go to the feed lot with me and show me approximately where the can was buried. I hope some day to get back to this one, for to my knowledge no one has turned up the missing can yet.

Willow Springs Gold—Fact

A few miles southwest of Pilot Rock, on the north slope of Battle Mountain is Willow Springs. This was a common watering place for travelers using the Pendleton—John Day trail.

Willow Springs was just off the stage route, but it was not a regular stop or watering place, because although only a few yards off the trail, the springs lay in a deep pocket. Stages did stop from time to time, however, so passengers could refresh themselves with the cool clear water.

The following story was told me by several old-timers in the Pendleton-Pilot Rock area. There are still two of the old stage men living in Pendleton: Bert Lovell who worked for the stage company between Ukiah and Pendleton, and Fayette Meltic who drove this route for a time.

Living at Willow Springs in a shack was a man who most people felt was a little off, but he was always friendly and always invited riders to eat and spend the night. He was apparently very lonely and wanted someone to talk to. The thing that made him stand out was that, on nights when he had visitors staying with him, he would tell his visitors that he had plenty of money hidden. He would then go outside, be gone for a few minutes and return with a leather bag of gold coins, to prove his story.

Most of the old-timers I talked with who had witnessed this act, agreed there was exactly $4,200.00 in the bag. Friends of his tried to talk him out of showing the money to everyone; they feared someone would do him harm trying to steal it. When told to be cautious, he would laugh and say nobody would ever find his money, and he would die before he would reveal its location.

His remains were discovered one day in the ashes of the burned shack. It was never learned how he died—in the smoke and fire of the burning cabin or by the hands of a money-hungry person who then set fire to the cabin to hide his terrible crime. All the old-timers I talked with agreed that he took the secret of his hiding place with him to his grave. They feel that the $4,200 is still under a rock or some other marker, just a few minutes' walk from the site of the old cabin. A lot of people have searched but nothing has ever been found, as far as is known. I visited this site once, and spent half a day searching, but turned up nothing. I have a hunch about this one though, and if I get the chance I'll see if this hunch won't pay off.

$36,000 In Coin—Fact

Just a few miles east of Heppner, Oregon, on the north fork of Hinton Creek, is what is probably a fabulous hoard of gold coins, by today's values. This treasure, reputed to run $36,000 or more, was the property of an old homesteader and rancher. I cannot remember the man's name, but anyone in the Hinton Creek area or the people who own the property now can tell anyone caring to know. I talked with one lady four years ago, living in Irrigon, Oregon, who told me that on her twelfth birthday the old man had given her a ten-dollar gold piece, or, as she called it, a gold eagle.

As a girl she lived on a homestead on Hinton Creek. She rode to school on a mule, a distance of about four miles. Her trail took her directly by the old rancher's home, and once in a while her mother would send fresh bread or a pie, to give to the old man. I talked with this lady for several hours, and she told me as much as she could about the layout

"No sir, you DID NOT say 'Greetings from the Great White Father in Washington, D.C.'—you said, 'Stupid red savage, the white men will bury you'."

of the ranch. She said there was a house, small barn, sheep shed, a cooler shack built over the creek, and a shack that was used as a tack room and shop. Up the slope of a hill about 100 yards from the building was a dugout, in which the rancher had lived when he first settled on Hinton Creek and which, she told me, he still lived in once in awhile in extremely cold weather.

It was in the dugout that the old man gave her the gold eagle. She described the box he took it from as being made of wood and about the size and shape of the old-time deep cigar boxes. He had let it be known that he was a successful miner before moving to the Hinton Creek homestead. I've been told that when he died, a number of neighbors descended on the place, and did everything short of tearing the building down to locate his wealth. Nothing was ever found.

A number of stories circulated as to where he kept his money hidden. One version is that he had it separated and cached in spice cans. Another is that he put it in an old pot-bellied stove, and buried the whole stove. All of the buildings have been torn down now, piece by piece—still nothing. The old house was razed just a few years ago and reconstructed as a bunkhouse, about a mile down the creek.

The site of the old homestead is now on the Kilkinney ranch. The ranch today is operated by Don Greenup. A few years ago Don decided to build an earth dam to be used for irrigation and for stock watering. Don chose the site of the dam to be a mile above the ranch. Some of the dirt which had to be moved came from the area where the old rancher's shop and cooler shack had stood years before. The pond formed by the dam is not large nor is it deep, but it was ideal to stock with fish for his children and friends to enjoy. It was after people started fishing and swimming here that the fun began. One fisherman from Heppner found a twenty-dollar double eagle, in water about a foot deep, just lying there waiting to be picked up. I have heard two or three other reports of single coins being found, but never verified these stories. A few years ago Don's small boys and their friends were fishing, swimming, and digging in the

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sand at the water's edge, when the boys dug out five five-dollar gold pieces.

It was at this time I got interested in the location, and did a little research as to why the coins were there. I came up with the story you have just read. On two different occasions I drove to Heppner to visit the site and to talk with Don Greenup. He gave me permission to search on a 50-50 basis. Both times I was there, it rained so hard the metal locator was useless. I did find what I believe to be the site of the old shop or tack room, due to the large amount of nails and pieces of metal I found in a ten by 12 area (part of this ground was graded down in building the dam). Also, on the side of the hill overlooking the lake, I located what I think to be the old dugout.

At the time I last talked with Don, he told me that if I could get any indication that it would be worthwhile, he would lower the water in the pond so we could give it a good going over.

It's my firm belief that when Don built his dam, the bulldozers moved at least part of this treasure, if not all of it. This would explain the coins scattered on the bottom of the pond. The bulk of the remainder could be in the fill of the dam, which is about fifty yards long and twelve or fourteen feet deep at its highest point. It it were dry, a good metal locator would work fine on the face of the dam. In looking over the site, and figuring the course of the creek, I estimate that the bulldozers took no more than a couple of feet off the south bank of the creek, and that it just barely scratched the surface where the old shop and cooler house sat. I think the bulk of the treasure will be found in or around the old dugout site; if not there, then the dozer probably moved it all.

So there you have it. If a person cares to do a little research in eastern Oregon, there is no end to the treasure clues he can come up with. There is the story of the stage robbery at Athena, or the stage robbery at Toll Gate. Another concerns three old half-dollars, picked up by a farmer plowing his field only a short distance from the Dayton, Washington, stage robbery site, in which so much silver was taken, the holdup men were supposed to have buried part of it because of the weight.

This could be a pleasant and profitable summer for anyone who likes to combine detective work and prospecting.

Cowboys in Town

(Continued from page 41)

tion and the rider was thrown, not over or under, but right through the pole corral fence. From that day on the horse was known as Dead Easy.

A sinking sun was casting long dark shadows across the dusty hoof-scarred arena when fat Charley Irwin rode out leading the brown gelding. There were no saddle or spur scars anywhere on Dead Easy's unkempt hide, and he carried his head high.

Minor, as was his way, took much time in saddling and mounting. The horse was turned loose and he ran some thirty feet and then exploded. Tom Minor was doing none of his famous exhibition tricks as this lightning-fast equine trickster bucked and bawled around the arena. But the horse was ridden and now it was up to the judges.

The five judges compared notes and then announced they had another tie. They could not choose between Minor's ride on Dead Easy and Sowder's ride on Steamboat. Final judgment was postponed until the following day when both riders would be given a re-ride switch in mounts. This time, Minor would be up on Steamboat and Sowder on Dead Easy.

Tom Minor rode first and on this occasion the great Steamboat was anything but great. The judges shook their heads, all knowing that Minor had prevented the horse from doing his best. There was, however, nothing in the then scanty rules governing bronc riding contests to combat this unfair practice.

Then Sowder was turned loose on the rambunctious Dead Easy and both horse and rider gave their all. Sowder received an ovation from the crowded stands as the pickup-man got him off the bronc.

The judges huddled together with the festival secretary while all others on hand anxiously awaited their announced verdict. Sowder, wearing the championship belt, stood talking with cowboys Lee Van Hueton and B. F. Stone.

The secretary left the judges and hurriedly approached the trio. "Thad," he said, "take off the belt."

Sowder, now certain that he was being given the business, slowly unbuckled the elaborate belt from around his slim waist. Stone and Van Hueton both loudly protested the action and it appeared that they were about to attack the secretary.

"Now, boys," the flustered secretary retorted, "we have to do this, as always, in the proper manner."

He took the belt, and then the long awaited announcement was made: "The winner of this year's Mountain and Plain Festival bucking horse riding contest"—a pause—"is again Thad Sowder of Cheyenne, Wyoming."

The Mystery of Little Wing's Medicine Sack

(Continued from page 33)

the store enclosure, and came striding in, heading directly for Sha-pa-nah-she (Ed). The trader was uneasy. He didn't like the look in the Osage's eye but he followed him when he demanded to speak with him alone.

The Indian had his blanket over his head, a sure sign he was upset about something. Only one eye showed. The way an Osage used his blanket could tell a great deal. It served for privacy (as now) to conceal emotions, a carryall, shelter, signal, hiding place, burial shroud—no telling what was under one, but you could bet there was always a long sharp knife!

The white man sat down on the bench outside. Then the blanket revealed Little Wing, up from Hard Rope's camp. When Ed saw his face he was scared but he hoped he concealed it. Somehow Ed guessed it was all tied up with those scalps—or was it a guilty conscience?

Little Wing was one of the leaders under Hard Rope. Ed had never seen him come into the Agency alone before. Usually as dignified as a bronze statue, he was now in a state of mind! And most Osages were supposed to be well out on the prairie on the hunt.

The Indian wanted to know if the Great Spirit had talked to the white brother in sleep? Ed parried by asking if Little Wing thought the Great Spirit would talk one way to a red man and

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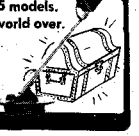

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Oklahoma Historical Society

Little Wing was a sub-chief under Hard Rope (reclining), seen here with other Osage friends of the perceptive Indian. From left: Black Dog, Sahpahkea, Governor Joe, Big Chief and Osage Captaine. Big Chief appears to have been wearing trousers made of fancylist.

another way to a white man? If Little Wing had had a bad dream, the best thing, Ed told him in fluent Osage, would be to forget it as a white man does a dream.

Little Wing didn't like that. He went on with a long tale about his childhood and his father's teaching. His father had been a chief and a great Osage, and had left him many trophies. Ed thought to himself, "including the four scalps?" but he merely listened politely.

The trunk belonged to Little Wing's father and his father had been dead many years. Little Wing had entrusted it to Pa-hah-pe (their name for John Florer) for lack of a safe place of his own. It had been up there in the loft ever since. But Little Wing, many miles away, had been troubled by a dream in which the Great Spirit had told him his father's treasures had been disturbed.

The white man was in a sweat as he listened, but he gave no answer. He realized Little Wing was still thinking of him as a friend, and was asking advice as he concluded his long harangue. In all Ed's years among the Osages he had never betrayed their trust in him. How could he explain his actions to an Indian who had a code of his own? To just say the missing scalps would be returned wouldn't help. And it was vital to keep the friendship of the Osage customers. Violence was not yet a thing of the past. The extraordinary thing about it was: Little Wing had not been in the loft since Ed and his brother had looked in the trunk!

Ed suggested that Little Wing go upstairs and investigate. The trunk must still be there, and Ed promised no one else would disturb him while he was in the loft.

When he was out of sight, Ed went to the warehouse and whispered a translation of Little Wing's worried speech. Tom, too, was scared.

Little Wing stayed in the loft for hours. At noon, Ed went to dinner but couldn't eat much. When he went back to relieve Tom, Little Wing was standing motionless at the foot of the stairs. his head in his blanket. He looked as if a death sentence were upon him.

"My brother, now will you believe that the Great Spirit talks to the red man in his dream? But the Great Spirit did not tell me where to look for that which is gone. As long as I live I must seek it. Help me, my brother, to find what is gone."

Little Wing didn't describe what was missing, but never had the young white man felt so utterly miserable, ashamed. He had always been "square," and the Osages trusted him. What to do—what was best to do—he didn't know.

Ed had been right in believing the trunk belonged to an Indian no longer living. But the uncanny way Little Wing had somehow come to know the trunk had been disturbed before he ever went up the stairs—well, that was a mystery.

Ed looked the Indian straight in the eyes and said yes, he would help him in any way he could. He advised Little Wing to tell no one else about his father's missing treasure, and at last the Indian stalked off, taking the trunk with him.

For three years thereafter the white man felt haunted by Little Wing, who came again and again and again to ask if there were any news. But Ed knew he couldn't just hand over the scalps and say he was "sorry"! The Medicine Sack had been profaned, desecrated, in their eyes. No amount of explanation or apology would help, and there had been no possible opportunity to slip the things back in place.

During summers in the Agency settlement, and winters out on the Plains with the wagons, Little Wing kept up his questioning. Then one day, Ed heard that Little Wing had died. It was thought to be pneumonia. Ed couldn't help but feel relieved.

As Agent Beede wrote, as late as 1876, in his annual report: "The Osages were, as yet, most of them, wild, blanket Indians, far from civilized, hardly ready to give up the war-dance and the scalping knife. . . ."

In after years there was one souvenir of his days with the Osages that Ed Finney never liked to look at. It had become the symbol of the one time he felt he had betrayed the trust given him by an Indian.

Walt Coburn's Tally Book

(Continued from page 13)

looked into his eyes.

Sometimes Porky worked in the mines in the Little Rockies, swinging a muckstick or a singlejack. Or he would go to work on the ranch, digging post holes, or if it was haying season, he'd handle a pitchfork. There were always callouses on his hands. And that paunchy look was deceptive as hell. It was all heavy muscle and hard taller across his paunch. Porky was a hard man to whip. And despite the callouses, his fingers were nimble. A gambler's hands don't have to be the long fingered, well kept hands of a dude.

Where he was unknown, they always took Porky Deniff for a rube. And that was how he played it.

"There was a little larceny in the boys last night," Porky would tell it later. "There's a law agin it, that gives a man a few years in the pen. I let 'em off easy when I had to loan 'em breakfast money."

The headquarters for the Deniff boys was in the Little Rockies country of Montana, where they were well known, well liked or well hated as the case might be. But nobody ever called them tinhorns, or said their gambling was crooked. Because it wasn't. They didn't have to cold deck a man or slip a card off the bottom. The law of averages is with the dealer banking the game. Naturally they got into fights. Every man in the Little Rockies got into those fights. Sometimes they were gang fights that wrecked a saloon.

"Let's take it over to Dutch John's across the street," Sam would say with a grin. "No use in us wreckin' my joint."

Those fights were rough, wild, half serious and half just rowdy fun. The only men who didn't wade in were drunk sheepherders or men grown too old and stove up to take a hand in it. Those Little Rockies ruckuses were a wide open game. The chips were free, and the drinks were on the losers.

Now and then the Deniff boys would get wind of a big game. In Butte, Montana, then the richest hill on earth; or in Reno, Nevada; Denver, Colorado; Juarez, across the bridge from El Paso,

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Texas; or in Tia Juana, Baja California. They never said anything about it or told when or where they were going. Each of the brothers would pull out from town or the ranch, alone. Each with a gambler's bankroll in his pocket. When they reached their destination, each would drift into town alone. If there were three hotels, they each stayed at a different hotel. They never spoke to one another. They remained total strangers Nobody would ever take them for brothers.

Each man had his own name. It could be any name, but never Deniff. When they sat at the same gambling table, they sat in as strangers.

When they'd clean up, they'd move out. Perhaps it was Sam who had the winnings. Or Luke. Or Porky. But you could give big odds that one of the Deniff boys had money in his pocket, and it was more than just chicken feed.

When times were dull and lay heavy on their hands, they often quarreled among themselves. And those quarrels were bitter as raw quinine. They might go for weeks or months without speaking.

But when they got wind of a big game, they pooled their bets and headed yonderly. Then they would drift back to the Little Rockies and split the proceeds. Then pick up the feud where they'd left off.

For the most part, outsiders never knew the cause of their bitter quarrels. They kept it to themselves and within the family triangle.

If the Deniff boys didn't like you, they could be hard haters. But if a man was their friend, he could go to any one of the three and ask a favor, and get it. If it was money, if they didn't have that much, they'd raise it for you. To offer them a written receipt was an insult. Sam, Luke and Porky Deniff were gamblers whose word was as good as a banker's bond.

They never cheated at cards unless they caught the other man cheating. Then they beat him at his own game.

Sam's wide grin. Luke's brittle laugh. Porky's calloused hands. You'd never know they were blood brothers, unless you stood them alongside one another. Then you'd get a look at their eyes. I don't remember now if the eyes of the three brothers were the same color. But there was that same look in the eyes of Sam, Luke and Porky, that marked them for the Deniff Boys, Gamblers.

Wild Old Days

(Continued from page 35)

Many a forlorn miner stared at the last few grains of "dust" in the bottom of his poke, and then around him to see if there wasn't *something* that could be added to it to make it stretch around another jug of red-eye, another stack of chips, or a roll of tickets to be spent with the dancehall girls. And a lot of them tried—everything from cornmeal to painted rock chips—only to learn the crime-does-not-pay axiom at the hands of an irate bartender.

The strangest "bum gold" tale of them all, however, began with a little half-hearted prospecting venture on the part of a pair of rum-riddled hangers-on whose address at the time was Centerville. The partners (their names are lost to history—possibly even were unknown at that time) were pursuing their fortunes on a low hill east of town when

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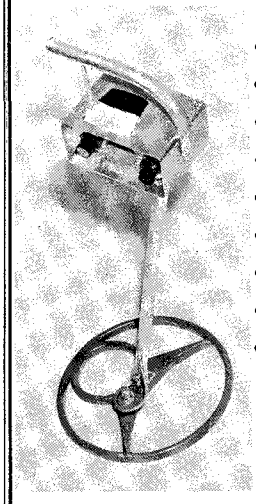

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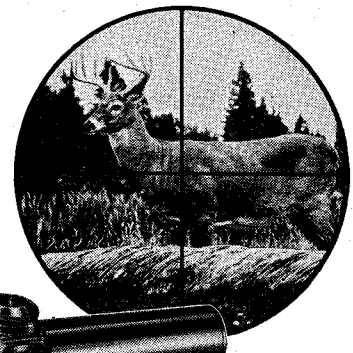

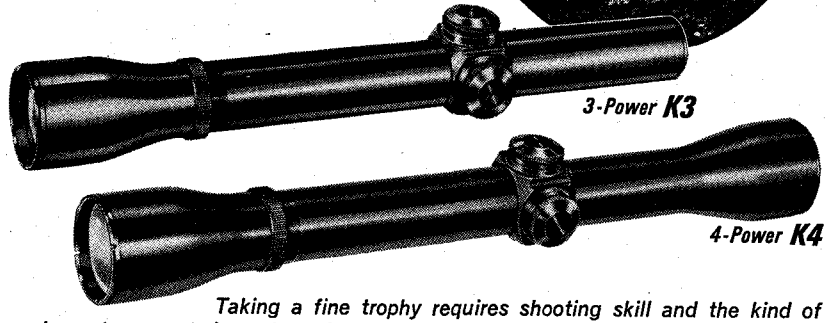

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they stumbled on a large deposit of yellowish sand and gravel. Thinking they had just made the largest strike in history, the gents grabbed up all they could carry and headed for the nearest saloon to celebrate.

A saloonkeeper almost took some of the stuff, in fact he even had some on his scales, and possibly a less experienced man would have accepted it. Then he declined, saying something about the amount of the "dust" it took to weigh up. He sent the miners to the assay office in Placerville. They came back crestfallen.

The yellowish sand and gravel looked a little like gold, and it was heavy. It just didn't happen to have value. The yellow sand became known as "Bummer Hill Dust" in honor of the unfortunate fellows who made the original find.

After that, with men and money being what they are, and mining camp morals being no better than they had to be, it was only a matter of time until Boise Basin's more enterprising gentry were mixing the sand of Bummer Hill with a little of the real thing and passing it off on unsuspecting gamblers and barkeeps.

When blended in proper proportions, Bummer Hill Dust couldn't be detected by the naked eye. The only place it showed up was in the assay office melting pots, and the treachery was discovered too late to stop the flow of the stuff into the Basin's commerce. In fact, when a committee from the miner's association rode out to destroy the deposit, they found that it had been nearly mined out. The Basin boys had recognized a good thing when they saw one, and packed the sand off to add to their mining profits, just as the cafes in town added ground-up walnut shells to the coffee to make it go farther.

After that, for a time, it became very hard to spend gold "dust" in the area. Even the hated greenbacks had their day. Some of the merchants wouldn't take anything that hadn't been through the assay office melting pots. Others devised intricate devices to measure the volume as well as the weight of the "dust," knowing that the sand took up more space per ounce.

THE ONES to suffer most from the phony metal were the Chinese. The "China Boys" had little truck with the assayers—or any other white man, for that matter. When they had an excess of the yellow metal they would deposit it with the head of their Tong for safekeeping. The Tongs, in turn, would keep the gold in its original form for fear the assayers would steal some of it in the ingot-making process.

They were consequently the last to discover the truth of the Bummer Hill Dust rumors, and when the whole thing was over, owned more $16-an-ounce yellow sand than any other mining group in the entire West. With the inter-Tong transfer of funds, a portion of the Bummer Hill Dust made its way into nearly every other Chinese community. From San Francisco to Denver, the yellow sand showed up in amounts varying from a few grains to wheelbarrow loads.

In Silver City, Idaho Territory, a group of Chinese merchants hired the local brass band to play for a funeral, and paid the group with dust liberally cut with the sand of Bummer's Hill—a situation that, when discovered, caused the local newspaper, the *Owyhee Avalanche*, to comment that maybe the gold was as good as the music, at that.

The Bummer Hill affair died out as a major problem when the Territorial Legislature passed laws providing for a prison sentence for the possession of bum gold, and the courts backed up the intent of the law with liberal interpretations.

Honesty among mining camp denizens wasn't considered a particular virtue, but prudence was. And possession of yellow sand, gold covered lead, or any of the other fraudulent materials, became imprudent, to say the very least. The Bummer Hill hoax was over.

CATTLE AND KIDS

By S. E. (Ed) Bogart

WHEN I was just a boy, almost sixty years ago, we lived on a homestead inside a large cattle ranch in northwestern Kansas. One of the jobs that I and my little brother, who was only seven at the time, had was to draw water from a well which was located about 100 yards west of the house in a draw. We could not see the house from the well. It was no little job for us, as I was only eleven at the time and the well was 105 feet deep and cased with six-inch galvanized casing. The bucket was of four-inch casing about five feet long, with a bail at the top, a wooden plug in the bottom with a hole in it, and a leather flap on the inside. It would let the water in, and the weight of the water held it closed when the bucket was lifted up.

We would let the bucket down in the well and then pull it back up by turning the windlass. It was emptied into a tub for our one and only cow, Bess. While I was drawing water each afternoon, my brother would go get Bess and lead her down to drink. This afternoon that I am thinking of started out as usual. I went to the well and Harol went to get the cow. She was picketed just north of the house. We had not seen the range cattle away down in the flat or I would not have let him go by himself. We always had to shut the cow in the barn and we children had to stay inside when the range cattle were around. They were black, curly-haired and very mean, and would attack anyone on foot.

When Harol loosed the cow that day she saw the other cattle and started toward them, and a seven-year-old boy does not have much chance to hold a cow. But the little fellow just hung onto the rope and tried to stop her. When the Black Angus range cattle heard her bawl, they all came running.

I heard her bawl, too, and ran up the hill to see why. I tried to call to Harol but he did not hear me. Instead of Brother letting go the rope and lying down, he just hung on.

Bob Weatherhead, an Indian man who was riding by, saw the cattle all running and, of course, stopped to watch them. Seeing my brother, he tried to get to him before the cattle did. I was running as fast as I could to help Harol, and still calling for him to stop, but it was no use. I can still see Bob lying down over his horse's neck and hear him holler as only an Indian can. I saw the smoke from his six-shooter as he fired over the herd trying to stop them. Then I saw my brother disappear as the cattle closed around him.

I stopped and stood there knowing I was unable to help. As I watched, it seemed to me that Bob's horse never faltered as it plunged into that milling mass of cattle of about 400 head. I could see Bob's head and shoulders as he fought to get through, then he disappeared. I feared his horse had gone down, but Bob came up again and there was Harol under his arm.

As the Indian worked his way out of the herd and came toward me, all I could do was to stand there and cry. I walked back to the house beside them holding on to his stirrup. He tried to explain to us that no animal was worth the life of one little boy. I wish that I could tell it in the words that he used but I cannot. Yet he made us understand that we should be willing to give our best to protect our property, but should not give our lives.

Bob was a wonderful man and many were the lessons he taught Harol and me that helped us through the years.

Some time the next day he found our cow and brought her back to us. And the next spring she had a little black calf which was the pride and joy of my brother. Kids don't worry long about narrow escapes, and when I think back, it was just one more of the good times we had there on the old homestead.

The Boom Days of Staging

(Continued from page 24)

the operation was successful, it soon became know as the "Jackass Mail" because it took so long to get mail through.

In a further effort to get mail to and from California, the Post Office Department let a contract to John Butterfield, the organizer of the American Express Company, to carry mail from St. Louis, Missouri to San Francisco by way of Oklahoma Territory, El Paso and Los Angeles, a distance of approximately 2,800 miles.

Since this contract carried an annual subsidy of $600,000, Butterfield bought coaches and fine horses, and with experienced preparation, put the line into service. The Butterfield Overland Mail began a semi-weekly service on September 15, 1858, and put the first stagecoach through to San Francisco on a twenty-five day schedule, arriving October 10.

This in reality was the first transcontinental overland mail service. Though the primary purpose was the carrying of mail, the law required that it be carried by relays of stagecoaches and it, therefore, became the first transcontinental passenger line, as well.

Beginning with this service, a passenger could take the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad to St. Louis, the railroad train to Tipton, Missouri, and there begin the remaining 2,800 miles by stagecoach, to complete a transcontinental journey. Waterman Ormsby, a reporter for the *New York Herald*, was sent out by his editors to make this complete westbound trip on the first run. His reports and diary are now a matter of history as recorded in the Huntington Library volume, *The Butterfield Overland Mail.*

Two things augered against the Butterfield Overland Mail to San Francisco. The schedule was twenty-five days and the route was through the South. The route was considered vulnerable in event of civil war, and operations were brought to a halt, as feared, soon after the firing on Fort Sumter in March, 1861. The last through mail over the route arrived April 6, 1861.

The Central Route, considered inoperable because of the crossing of the Continental Divide, the Sierras and the

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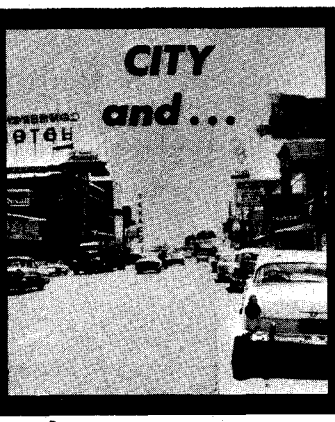

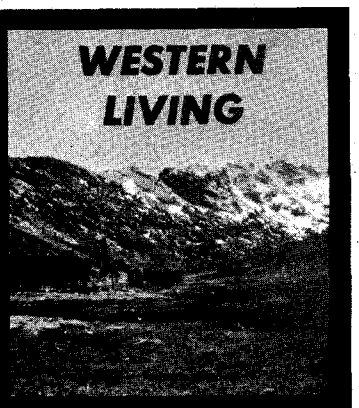

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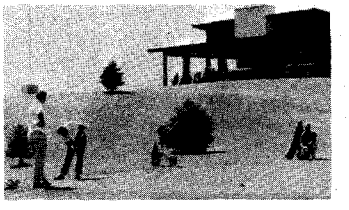

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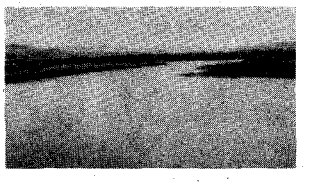

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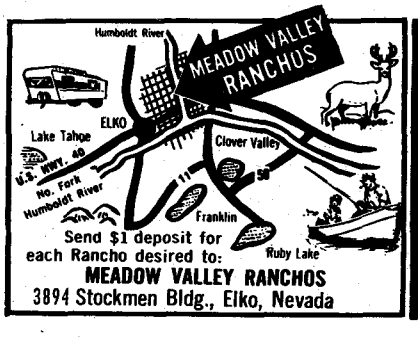

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rigors of winter, was, at least, a route unexposed to harassment in event of civil war.

In 1859, Russell, Majors and Waddell, the firm which founded, owned and operated the Pony Express, operated a daily stage from the Missouri River to Cherry Creek (Denver) to provide transportation and private mail service to the gold fields which were discovered in 1858. In 1859 they bought the Hockaday contract to Salt Lake City and put in a daily stage line from the Missouri River to Salt Lake City. A few months after that, the Post Office Department canceled the Chorpenning contract to carry mail from Sacramento to Salt Lake City and awarded it to Russell, Majors and Waddell.

They began operation of a semi-monthly stage from Sacramento to Salt Lake City and a daily stage from Salt Lake City to the Missouri River under the corporate name of the Central Overland California and Pikes Peak Express Company in compliance with the mail contracts. This became the first transcontinental mail and stage line to California over the central or emigrant route. Mark Twain, the author of the great western narrative, *Roughing It,* an American classic, made his trip overland to California on the Russell, Majors and Waddell stages.

Whereas there were a hundred or more local stage lines operating internally in California, there were only three transcontinental mail stages into California. James Birch and His "Jackass Mail" into San Diego was the first in 1857. This was followed by the famous Butterfield Overland Mail to San Francisco in 1858. Then in 1859 Russell, Majors and Waddell put their stage line through from the Missouri River to Sacramento.

No local stage line in California nor the three transcontinental stage lines overland into California could hope to pay expenses by the carrying of mail and had to rely on additional income from passengers and express. The stage lines which had no mail contracts were still further hardpressed. Actually, the principal business of the stage lines had to be the production of revenue from passenger fare and express charges.

THE EXPRESS companies, hundreds of which were in existence in California from 1849 to 1869, served additional functions somewhat similar to those of today's travel agency.

Since they had local offices and agents, they handled express packages on and off the stage lines and acted as agents for the stage lines by selling tickets, boarding passengers, handling baggage, etc. A local express agent often would become a celebrity in his community because of the personal relationships and services rendered to the townspeople. On the other hand, the stage driver was a solitary individual who oftentimes changed from one stage route to another.

The foregoing makes it easy to understand why express agents and the deeds performed for their employers were blown up into romantic episodes which, now that the services are a thing of the past, have been exaggerated in importance by uninformed writers. Also, the personal services of the express company employees have been used as a means of plagiarizing the history of the stage lines by crediting the operation of the stage lines to the express companies. Actually, there is not as much merit in glamorizing the early-day express companies as there is in recognizing the valor of the early-day mail service. The mail service of equivalent time was, in volume, many times that of the express companies, but the Government does not publicize its adventurous accomplishments.

By the same token, the stage lines of California, including the three trunk line transcontinental overland mail services, are a thing of the past and the names of all and their deeds have been forgotten, except by a few who are students of history. This is not as it should be, for if history were brought into true perspective before the public, the stage lines and their adventurous operations and the great names connected therewith, would be more vividly cemented into the public mind.

Wells Fargo Express Company had an exemplary history which is now known to everyone, and without crediting it with history which was not its own, it still had enough to make one of the greatest adventure stories of western history. And there were others.

Adams and Company, banking and express, founded in 1839, moved into California in 1849 with the gold rush. Within two or three years it had express offices in every gold mining community in California, and the early-day woodcuts of the old mining towns show a small office with a pennant on top reading "ADAMS AND COMPANY."

Wells Fargo and Co. was incorporated in New York in 1852 for the purpose of entering business in California, but the gold rush was over by then and many of the miners were leaving the canyons. Nevertheless, by persistence, expansion and growth they emerged as the great express company of California.

Its operations were confined to the express business and the banking business connected therewith. It operated continuously under the New York incorporation and was never incorporated in California. Never at any time did it operate a stage line in the State, yet many people today are under that impression. With the pending completion of the first transcontinental railroad. Wells Fargo Express became concerned with obtaining a contract for express rights. As a preliminary move, Wells Fargo combined with other express companies and the Holladay Overland Mail Company, which was operating the stage line between the converging ends of the rapidly building railroad.

The merger was effected on November 1, 1866, under the vehicle of Ben Holladay's Colorado charter which was granted to him by the Colorado Territorial Legislature. With this merger Wells Fargo ceased to be a New York corporation, and the board of directors of the Holladay Overland Mail Company changed the name to "Wells Fargo and Company," which corporation is still in existence, and has been in existence without interruption as a Colorado corporation to this day.

This newly merged company inherited the mail contract held by Ben Holladay and, beginning November 1, 1866, operated stage lines in the Middle West between the converging ends of the trans-Continental railroad.

Wells Fargo's directors soon realized their mistake and recognized that staging was at sunset. On May 16, 1868, the board directed the president to sell all

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of the company's stage lines. This short period of stage line operation nearly ruined the company.

During the stagecoach era, Wells Fargo's principal business was in the express business in California. When Lloyd Tevis assumed the presidency of Wells Fargo in 1872, he moved the operating headquarters from New York to San Francisco where it remained until 1905 after which it was moved back to New York City. Wells Fargo & Co. has, however, been continuously a Colorado corporation from 1866 to date, and was never incorporated in California.

AFTER the golden era of staging in California and overland, the railroads, both transcontinental and local, became the principal mode of transportation. But communities which were not located on a railroad had to depend on local stage service to make connections. Therefore, as before, there were still hundreds of local short line stage routes in California.

A similar service was required of the express companies, and they continued to use the stage lines for transportation of their express to and from the railroad terminals. This was the era of Black Bart in California. His first holdup of a stage was in 1875 and his last in 1883.

He first held up the Sonora to Milton stage, next the stage operating between San Juan and Marysville. The third was between Yreka and Roseburg. His operations, covering twenty-seven holdups, ranged from Calaveras County through the Counties of Sonora, Yuba, Sierra, Butte, Plumas, Shasta and Trinity.

This indeed was a wide field of operation, and it could be safely said that there were as many different stage lines involved as there were holdups.

As the business of shipping express on the stage lines decreased, shipments by rail increased and Wells Fargo developed an immense business. There were many express companies shipping on the railroads in different areas.

Due to the inefficiency of having to ship through several express companies over great distances, President Woodrow Wilson, as an emergency war measure, took over the express operations of all the companies in 1917, and combined them into the American Railway Express Agency, now known as the Railway Express Agency. He did not, however, destroy the corporations. Wells Fargo and Co. continued under its original charter, is still in existence, and operates an armored car service in New York City.

And now the lowly wagon comes into the picture—as unappealing as the stagecoach was exciting. With the coming of the railroads, the express companies used the iron horse to carry their express shipments. But they had the problem of delivery to the railroad and delivery to the consignee at the other end. This brought about the use of fleets of horses and wagons which went the rounds of California cities' streets delivering express. The express companies were compelled to enter the field for obvious reasons. But the operation was that of delivery wagons and not stagecoaches.

In presenting the foregoing, it has been the purpose of this author to clarify the various fields of endeavor of stage lines, the express companies and the United States Postal Service, and to give credit where credit is due.

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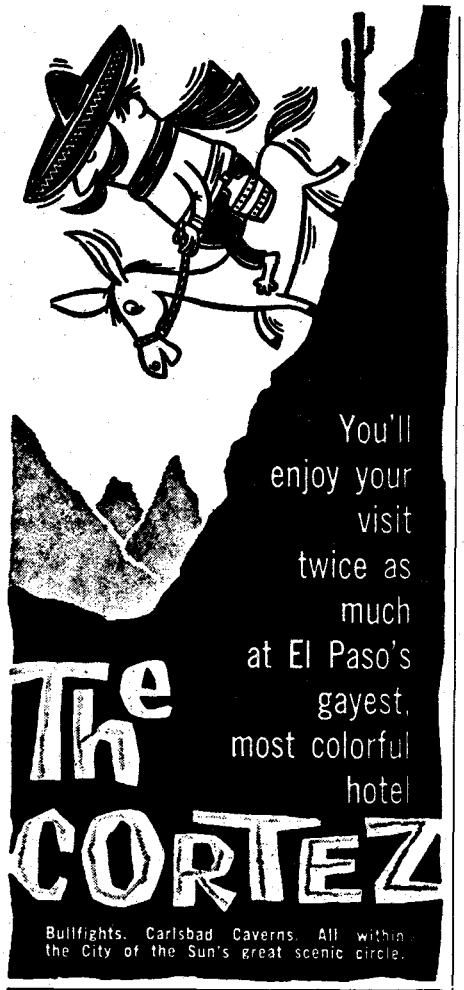

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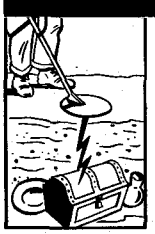

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WESTERN BOOK ROUNDUP

By The Old Bookaroos

RATING RARE RELICS

Treasury of Frontier Relics—A Collectors Guide (Edwin House but distributed by Crown Publishers, $6.95) is by a Yankee packrat gone Texian (the worst kind), Les Beitz. He sure is a brave man—that Les. He just up and says what things, old things, old western things, are worth and you don't have to let those demon dealers kid you about the rarity of anything no more! You just slip your copy of Les' book out of your big secret pocket (it has to be big, this is a big book) and take a quick glance at the "Scarcity Factor" and jerk 'em up short by saying "Oh, no! That isn't rare, it's a mere 5." Now "5" is just the middle of scarce and not rare at all, as any reader of Les will soon learn. And he deserves to have a lot of readers. What is a skinning knife worth? A buffalo skull? A bear trap? A whiskey canteen? A Sharps rifle? A Peacemaker? A branding iron? And which of these and dozens of other relics of our western expansion are truly rare? Scarce? Or merely uncommon or even common? You'll have to read Les' book to find out—no trade secrets revealed except in it. Fred Gipson of *Old Yaller* fame wrote the introduction and this book is illustrated with numerous drawings and photos of the relics plus three drawings by Frederic Remington and eleven by N. C. Wyeth (known in the East *nowadays* as Andrew's father and in the West as Pete Hurd's father-in-law). There is an index and tables of value for the various kinds of relics. And Les puts in a plug for those first, or magazine, appearances of a tremendous number of great western illustrations by Remington, Wyeth, Russell and others. Highly recommended.

RANGE LIFE

Where the Rockies Ride Herd (Sage Books, $5.75) is the highly entertaining autobiography of the boyhood of veteran Western novelist and short story writer, Stephen Payne. Steve (John Stephen and "John" or "Johnny" in the book and to his old ranch compadres) grew up in North Park near the Colorado-Wyoming line. This is high or mountain range country and the northmost of the three great areas of natural grassland between the front range of the Rockies and the Continental Divide. Not a great deal has been written about pioneer range life in North Park, Middle Park and South Park and while Steve came along a little late (he was born in 1888) to be called a pioneer, he certainly absorbed a lot of North Park history as he grew up. The kids on this remote range (and it *was* remote when Steve was a boy and wasn't quite the easiest place in the world to reach in a 1919 Dodge when this reviewer first saw it in the mid-twenties) had their fun. Steve's father, an Englishman, came to the Park in 1884 as a homesteader. The Paynes knew everyone and Steve mentions most of them in connection with some incident of his boyhood. There is much about Steve's father, who became a successful cowman, and Arthur, Steve's brother. This is a well written book—Steve wrote much for the "pulps" and has about twenty books to his credit. There is an end sheet map of North Park, some good photos but, unfortunately, no index. Mighty good—good enough to urge Steve to continue his story through 1925 at least.

ELK HUNTING

Hunting elk for their two ivory teeth was pretty much a thing of the past by 1910. Elk teeth still make nice trophies and mementoes of hunting trips. The elk have survived hunting, massacres, many hard winters, and careless protection in some areas. They still summer in most of their old rugged mountain retreats. In *The Sucker's Teeth* (Sage Books, $2.95) Joe Black spins an interesting yarn that mixes the excitement of the hunting camp, nefarious ivory hunters, dumb dudes, and authentic western humor. Joe writes in the style that proves he has been there. His previous books are *Horses, Hitches, and Rocky Trails*, and *Mooching Moose and Mumbling Men.*

THE FIGHTING APACHES

The seven Apache tribes are relative newcomers in the southwestern United States. Except for the Eskimo, these Athapascan-speaking peoples are the latest arrivals from Asia. The history of the Apache is a story of continual pressure against them—first from large Indian tribes; Pawnee, Ute, and Comanche on the north and east; the Spanish and Mexicans from the south; and finally, the Americans from all sides. These continuing pressures forced the Apaches into the divisions recognized today and their final locations. *The Warrior Apaches* (Dale Stuart King, $3.50) by Gordon C. Baldwin is the story of the Chiricahua and Western Apache. This interesting book traces the origin, history, tribal organization, practical daily living, social life, government, religion, and warfare of this fierce and proud people. From such a factual background, the roles of Cochise, Geronimo, and Mangus Colorado take on new meaning. Perhaps no people have been more misjudged and less understood than the Apaches. This book sheds a great deal of light on a tribe which tempered the development of the West.

CHEROKEE HISTORY

Few are the Cherokees who can read and write Cherokee. Even the spoken language faces extinction. Sequoyah succeeded in 1821 in devising a crude but practical syllabary of the Cherokee language. Written accounts and records were sparingly written and often destroyed. *The Shadow of Sequoyah* (University of Oklahoma Press, $4.50) by Jack Frederick Kilpatrick and Anna

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Gritts Kilpatrick is a translated presentation of Cherokee writings. They were drawn from scarce documents written in Cherokee and help give an insight into this sensitive people seldom achieved in other works.

SANDOZ'S SAMPLER

Old Jules Country (Hastings House, $4.95) by Mari Sandoz is a selection from the works of the author. Twenty-seven chapters are drawn from *The Beaver Men, Crazy Horse, Cheyenne Autumn, The Buffalo Hunters, The Cattlemen, Old Jules, These Were The Sioux;* five other chapters are independent essays on such subjects as homesteads, snakes, coyotes and eagles. For those readers not familiar with Sandoz, *Old Jules Country* affords an excellent opportunity to become acquainted with the writer and with her interesting subjects. Unfortunately, there will be no new writings from her worthy pen; she died of cancer on March 10. Mari was a solid regional historian and she told her story in both fact and fiction. *Old Jules* and *Crazy Horse* have long been regarded as her best but you can't be far off the mark with any of her score or more.

BUFFALO HUNT

My Diary (University of Texas Press, $5.00) by Cornelia Adair has an introduction by Montagu K. Brown and is illustrated by Malcolm Thurgood. This book is a reprint of the diary of the author written during a two-month trip into the western United States with her husband in 1874. Starting in Ireland from her wealthy husband's estate, Mrs. Adair traced her journey through New York, Chicago, Upper Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, Colorado, and finally back to New York and the Europe-bound ship. The primary purpose of the trip was to hunt buffalo, but this adventure in Nebraska is only one of the many lively experiences of the journey. The author, a native of New York, later became a well-known figure in Texas ranching and social life spending many years running the famed J. A. Ranch near Palo Duro. Col. Charles Goodnight and John Adair established the J. A. Ranch under a partnership. After Adair's death, Mrs. Adair purchased Goodnight's interest and operated the ranch herself. The first edition of this book was printed for private circulation in 1918 and is now a rare collector's item.

The Courier's Ordeal

(Continued from page 27)

sergeants. The greatest blow was the loss of the ammunition. All of this disturbing news Sutherland also reported to Howard.

DESPITE the fearful odds against him and his painful injury, the courier pushed on where angels might well fear to tread in view of the rout of the artillerymen.

History is sketchy here as to the time when Sutherland left the supply wagon encampment. Although he reported to General Howard that he was starting in five minutes near high noon of August 9, he did not approach the battle lines, about four miles away, until dawn of August 10. This fact is confirmed by Indian sources, by Gibbon himself, and by G. O. Shields in *The Battle of the Big Hole.* Perhaps the artillerymen convinced the sergeant his chances of contacting Gibbon would be better at early dawn when the Indians were expected to be less alert.

It is known, however, that the two men he had counted on for guides refused to go with him. So Sutherland saddled up and rode off through the lodgepole pines, watchful and taut. The citizen wagonmaster, Kirkendall, got mounted and, overtaking the intrepid Sergeant, accompanied him until the sporadic cracking of rifles directed the pair toward the battlefield on the thinly wooded slopes above the Big Hole Basin. Kirkendall then turned back to the supply train.

As Sutherland rode along the ridge alone under cover of the false dawn, he heard no more firing. Fearfully he began to speculate whether the awful silence indicated that Gibbon's men had all been slain.

"I would have given the whole world for an answer that minute," he told his friend, Sergeant Connolly, later.

A desperate dilemma confronted him. Should he blunder on in the terrifying quiet of the woods? Or should he risk disclosing his presence to the Indians by halloing? He decided to shatter the nerve-racking silence with a shout.

Instead of an enemy bullet, an answering call came faintly from the shadows of a pine thicket somewhere below him.

"This wa-ay!"

Sutherland, both hopeful and apprehensive, loped down from the ridge, halloing again for guidance.

In the eerie stillness, the rear guard of young warriors, led by Alokut (Ollokot), Chief Joseph's younger brother, also heard the bold challenge. Most of the Nez Percés had withdrawn from the battlefield the preceding day, leaving only a small party to keep the troops pinned down in their trenches.

Yellow Wolf, a nephew of Joseph, recalled the incident in later years. The Indians, puzzled, wondered if the caller were a scout. They listened breathlessly and heard the pounding hoofs of a running horse. Soon they could detect a white man loping through the trees, headed toward the soldiers' entrenchments.

Warriors concealed in the shadows near where he passed could have killed him, but they chose to wait and learn what news he brought to the troops.

"When that rider reached the trenches," Yellow Wolf related, "the soldiers made loud cheering. We understood. Ammunition had arrived or more soldiers were coming. Maybe pack horse of cartridges left in the woods with soldiers guarding?"

Although a few braves searched the back trail, looking for the supposed ammunition, they just missed discovery of the supply train.

Thus, Sergeant Sutherland, despite all the odds against him and handicapped as he was by a badly sprained back, delivered his message to the beleaguered Gibbon.

Just who was "O. Sutherland?" Although not a fiction story, this real-life tale does have a surprise ending with an unsolved mystery. According to the U. S. Army record one "Oliver Sutherland" had re-enlisted on December 26, 1872 as a private, and became a sergeant in Troop B, First U.S. Cavalry, where he served until December 26, 1877. He had first enlisted, though, as John Dennis Geoghegan of Ireland, as a private in

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Company H, 18th Infantry, in 1862, and served in the Union Army during the Civil War. Following "Sutherland's" medical discharge in 1877, he became a prominent businessman of Vancouver, Washington, once again under his real name of Geoghegan. Why he had re-enlisted under an assumed name is unknown.

When Washington became a state in 1889, he served as Clark County's representative to the first legislature. "In 1894 when insurgent forces tried to draw the Republican Party into fusion with the Populists," a biographer states, "John D. Geoghegan was the presiding officer.

" 'He was a remarkable man and one of the best presiding officers I have ever known,' says a former United States Senator."

In all my searching, no explanation has come to light as to why Geoghegan let himself be known as Sutherland. However, it is rather unusual when a man can bring honor not only to his real name but to his alias also.

Additional sources: McWhorter, L. V. *Yellow Wolf: His Own Story*, Caldwell, Idaho: The Caxton Printers, Ltd., 1940, pp. 157-58.

Hunt, Garrett B., "Indian Wars of the Inland Empire," an unpublished manuscript, 1908, pp. 212-19.

Hunt, Garrett B., "Sergeant Sutherland's Ride," Mississippi Valley Historical Review, Vol. XIV, No. 1, June, 1927, p. 46.

The Tragic Wards

(Continued from page 12)

what came to be one of the most widely known of pioneer families. Then, accompanied by this same J. L. Tagert who had viewed Charlie Fox's remains so soon after his demise, the Wards hauled their freight westward.

Although Routt County was created in 1879, and the county seat at Hahn's Peak was then functioning, it is doubtful if word of the disposal of the Ward case ever traveled over the nearly 100 miles separating Egeria Park and the authorities. Even if it had, it was generally conceded that the loss of Charlie Fox was no disaster to the community, as he was somewhat less than a model citizen. They did do him the favor, though, of bringing in his mortal remains and planting him on the hill above where the railroad division town of Phippsburg was later established.

Years later, when we were kids at Lay in the first school in this isolated country, our teacher was Clorinte Duquette of Steamboat Springs, in Routt County. She told of a trip on which she and two of her aunts were traveling in a buckboard buggy driven by her father, from Wolcott to Steamboat Springs. These aunts were Mrs. Williams and Mrs. Adele F. S. Barnard. Coming through Gore Canyon, they came to a place in the road where a number of men were gathered. One of the men stopped them and directed Duquette to turn out and so avoid an unpleasant sight for the ladies. This "sight" was the partially decapitated body of Charlie Fox.

OBEYING THE EDICT of the settlers, Ward and his family moved on. In a few days they reached Juniper Springs on Bear River. Joe looked the country over for a day or two, then declared his intention of following Duffy's advice and taking a homestead at the Government bridge, three miles below the Duffy ranch on Bear River.

With the help of Tagert, Ward hauled rough lumber from Charlie Perkins' sawmill on the north part of Black Mountain. They soon had a house, a small barn, and a big corral built. Although Ward was absent from the ranch a couple of times for two or three days, Tagert continued to work and get things ready for winter.

It was during one of Ward's absences the following spring that Tagert met two ranchers who gave him food for thought. Tom Iles, who had a ranch under the huge bluffs on the north of Axial Basin, and Charlie Hulett, whose ranch was not far from Iles', stopped one day while riding for cattle and after talking with Mrs. Ward, walked out to the place where Tagert was busy building fence.

After the usual comments about weather, Indians and cattle, they asked Tagert if he knew the kind of man Ward was. Tagert did not deny that he knew Ward to be a hot-tempered and violent sort. But he was amazed when the two men told him that if he stayed with Ward he might find himself involved in very serious trouble. Without naming this trouble, they convinced him that it might be to his advantage to find other employment. Since Tagert's relationship with Ward was just that of a hired man, he finally, after a few weeks, accepted a better paid job with Iles. That is the last we hear of Tagert in connection with the Wards. Tagert must have minded his knitting regarding the wife, Hattie, or the daughter, Etta, a comely teenager who was not unnoticed by other men thereabouts. He probably knew Ward's touchiness concerning his womenfolk. So, he built corrals and fences. While he did this, Joe Ward built enmities. Of his neighbors, only Duffy did not have trouble with Ward.

One incident discloses Ward's nature and his unwillingness to let anybody put anything over on him. Black Bill McCune was a cowpuncher, a practical joker, and claimed to be a hard case, a claim which he had made stick. Like most of the cowboys who got to know the Wards, he cast covetous eyes at Etta. Like other cowboys he too begged to be given Etta's photograph which stood on a bureau in the Ward house. The girl gave him only the cold shoulder. Imagine the surprise of some cowpunchers visiting one evening at Duffy's, when Black Bill rode in, bearing in triumph the coveted photograph. He inferred Etta had given it to him.

The visitors soon left, but Black Bill decided to spend the night with Duffy. About midnight, Bill and Duffy, in the latter's bed, were deep in slumber, when there came a terrific thumping on the door. In burst Joe Ward, cursing and raving.

Duffy, groping for matches, struck a light to disclose Ward armed with a rifle and swearing to kill Black Bill. Bill had flattened himself in the lee of Duffy, so Ward ordered Duffy to move out in order that he might not share Bill's fate. It took all Duffy's persuasiveness to prevent the summary execution. He finally succeeded in mollifying Ward a little.

With a wicked grin, the father told Duffy, "All right, Charlie, I won't kill him—unless I have to. But I don't think I'll have to. I'll just make him take that picture back and hang it up where he got it."

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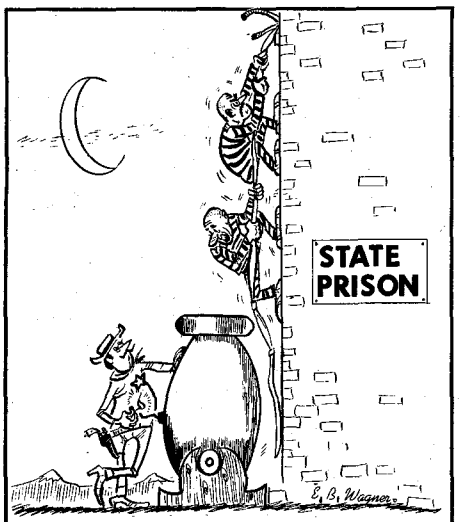

"I'll explain later, just get back in the cell."

Duffy perceived that this was an easy out for Bill and told him so.

"You're getting off easy, Bill," Charlie told him. "So do as he says and pile out and get dressed."

"Oh, no, he don't," Ward cut in. "He is going just like he is."

And that was the way Black Bill went—in his underwear and barefoot. In three inches of snow, clutching the purloined picture, he went limping down the trail. Behind him, on horseback and with the menacing rifle pointed at Bill's back, came Joe Ward.

The episode established Ward as a man who brooked no monkey business. It also deflated Black Bill McCune, and shut off for good his boasting of being a badman.

WHEN THE Government bridge was completed across Bear River everybody traveling north or south in the territory passed that way. These included ranchers, cowpunchers, freighters, trappers and probably outlaws. Over it flowed all traffic in the vicinity, so it was a favorable spot for a place to accommodate travelers with food, lodging, and feed and shelter for horses, mules and oxen. Such a place the Wards opened in their big log house and barn. The accommodations also included hard liquor. The place did a good business, and was known far and wide. It might have been an even better business if Ward had not quarreled with most of his neighbors for various reasons.

It was about this time, in 1883, that Wells Fargo attempted a project hitherto untried in this area. In the pine timber near Steamboat Springs they had a timber crew cut a few hundred logs. These were swamped down to the river and consigned to the waters, the idea being to float them more than 100 miles to the Lily Park ranch. The project was partly successful, and several of the excellent log buildings the ranch boasted were made from these logs. However, many of the pines lodged on sand bars, against trees, or were detoured into swamps and sloughs along the way. A few dozen followed the current into a long slough which ran next to the hills along the ranch of Jim Toney and beyond. Today this is part of the Pat Sweeney ranch.

The ranchers in the vicinity—no doubt assuming that if the good Lord sent logs, He wanted them to be used—proceeded to grasp the opportunity. Toney gave some thought to salvaging enough to build a needed barn. But while he thought, a neighbor, Old Bailey, acted. He did not enter on Toney's land to get his logs, but he did get them from the lower end of Toney's slough. When Toney went to snake out some for himself, he found a goodly pile of them already ricked up neatly on the bank

Old Bailey was a mild, harmless old bachelor who lived about where Charlie Craig now has a ranch. He didn't want to lose the labor he had put into dragging the timber from the water, but hesitated to contest Toney for possession.

Toney was a big and somewhat mean old cuss, so Bailey went up to the Wards', being on more or less friendly terms with them. Joe wasn't at home—and Bailey told Hattie his troubles. Clover, now a big lad of ten, thought he grasped the idea and was glad enough to go with Bailey, with Hattie's permission. As was the custom, he took along his rifle.

They jogged down the road and when they came up on a low hill quite near the log pile, sure enough there was Toney working with might and main to load a log on his wagon. Bailey sat on his horse, scratching his head and trying to make up his mind how to get peaceable possession of his logs. His cogitations were shattered by an explosion as Clover touched off a shot from his big old .45-70. Bailey saw chips fly from a log right under Toney's nose, and watched that surprised gentleman go hurtling over the log pile to take cover in their shelter.

This sudden declaration of war and opening of hostilities figuratively knocked Bailey off his horse.

"My good Lord," Bailey stuttered, "what are you trying to do, boy? You might have killed him."

"Well, Mr. Bailey," Clover drawled in the slow way he had, "wasn't that what we come down here for?"

When Bailey expostulated that all he wanted to do was to convince Toney that the logs were not his, Clover, showing the utmost disgust, slipped the rifle back into the scabbard, mounted his horse and rode back home.

THAT CLOVER was a chip off the old block was pretty well proven by this episode. A clincher came a short time later. Old Bailey must have told Toney how it came about that lead was thrown his way that day at the log pile. Anyhow, Toney went to the Wards' and, finding Joe away from home, told Hattie what he was going to do to Clover if he ever caught him on his place.

When Joe came home and was told the news, he acted in character. "Hook up the team to the wagon," he told Clover one morning. "We'd better go down and kill old Toney."

Later when Clover was twenty-five and we worked with him, he was a calm and jolly fellow, big and burly but humorous and likeable. I was twelve and was helping Hi Grinstead, a rancher and roundup cook, put up hay on the Moody place. Clover came to help us for a few days. He told many tales of early times, including the visit at Toney's.

"Didn't you try to argue your dad out of killing him?" Grinstead asked Clover.

"Try to talk the Old Man out of anything?" Clover chuckled. "Just as well try to fly without wings. The Old Man didn't have any use for Toney anyhow, and after he shot off his mouth to

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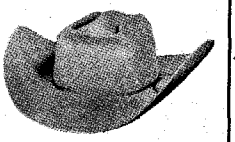

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Mother, that did touch the Old Man off. Besides that, I'd no more thought of not minding the Old Man than I would have thought of walking to the moon. Anyhow, I couldn't see anything wrong about killing Toney. Sounded like a good idea at the time."

Before they arrived, Ward gave Clover suitable instructions.

"I'd do the shooting only this team will scare when the shot goes off and you couldn't hold 'em," he explained. "So you sit in the back of the wagon with your feet hanging out. I'll turn the wagon around so you can get a good bead on Toney. I'll holler so he'll come to the door."

It all worked as planned. Ward circled the team in the Toney yard and emitted an ear-splitting whoop.

"Just as the wagon stopped, old Toney come to the door," Clover recounted. "He must have been eating, because he had an eating fork in his hand. I drawed a fine bead right on his left shirt pocket and yanked the trigger. The horses took off on a dead run. But Toney didn't fall. He ducked back in the house and in just a jiffy he was shooting at us. But we was too far away so we kept right on to the ranch."

As soon as Ward got the horses slowed down he began to berate Clover for missing his shot, accusing him of being scared. Not until they got home and examined the rifle did it occur to them how Clover, a dead shot, could have missed. A few days before, he had been hunting sage hens, using a very light load in the rifle. The rear sight had been raised several notches to make up for the low speed of the lighter load. He had overshot.

BESIDES QUARRELING with other ranchers along the river, by this time Ward was giving them another reason to hate him. At rather frequent intervals he was absent from his ranch for several days at a time. Coincident with these absences, his neighbors began missing some of their horses. As time passed and ranchers, in their infrequent meetings, talked about their losses, the matter began to form a pattern. A meeting was called to discuss the situation.

Comparing notes they became convinced that Ward was stealing their animals and selling them at Rawlins or other railroad points. In those days there were no brand inspectors, no stock detectives, and anyone with enough money to pay the freight could ship horses on any railroad.

The story that came to us, and it came straight, was this: All ranchers in the area who had been losing horses met, and decided upon drastic measures to call a halt to it. Agreement was unanimous. Even one whose piety was well known, but who had lost horses, was in full accord with the plans.

The next time Ward was gone from home and had disposed of another small bunch of horses at Rawlins, his movements were watched by those who had been alerted. We do not know the exact details of how Ward was followed or how the information was relayed to members of the group who had been victims of his thievery. But it is reasonable to assume that the plan followed was that used in those days by Indians, and copied by white men.

When Ward arrived in Baggs near the state line and tied his horse for a brief rest, a watcher could have ridden three miles to the high ridge just north of Fourmile Creek and touched off a fire of sagebrush and green cedar boughs. The dense smoke from this fire could have been seen easily by a watcher on Iron Springs Divide. The fire kindled by this man would have warned a watcher on the FitzPatrick cliff or Lay Peak and his signal would have brought the vigilantes together.

On the middle fork of Timberlake Gulch, a long draw runs up to the top of Iron Springs Divide. There the ranchers met, far enough removed from their ranches to make them feel secure from observation. We have seen the exact spot.

Joe Ward rested his horse for an hour at the settlement. Then he headed south along the dim road worn through the sagebrush by the wheels of soldiers' and freighters' wagons. He likely intended to get as far as Iron Springs by nightfall. At that spring was plentiful water and grass, so his weary horse could rest and graze while Ward slept. He could not foresee the timeless sleep that might begin long before he reached the spring.

If Ward ever had an inkling of his impending doom, it could only have been in the brief glimpse he had of the men as they arose as one from the dense sagebrush, their rifles blazing.

The executioners made no effort to stop the horse of Ward as, tail and mane flying, it bolted in the direction of its home ranch. Instead, they came forward to surround the still form. Among the possemen were those who had noted that, when the volleys were fired, one member did not join in the fusilade.

Now one of the men, a grim and dark-visaged giant, pointing at the body of Ward, commanded, "Put a couple of bullets into him, Jim."

Jim knew the temper and caliber of his companions. Without a word he raised his rifle and sent two bullets into the corpse. He was now officially committed; he might square himself with his strict conscience, but he could not deny that he, too, had shot Ward.

The leaders quickly searched the pockets of the dead man. A fat roll of bills they found was divided equally among them, a small enough repayment for what they had lost by Ward's thefts.

Joe Ward was dead. It would be many, many years before any of the posse would talk. But the widow, Hattie Ward, knew, and Hat Ward was not one to brood in silence. More than one of the ranchers came to know the vitriol of her fluent and profane tongue. Silence was their only answer.

Old Hat, the boy Clover, now eleven, and the girl Etta stayed on the ranch. Clover proved to be a tower of strength to the tough old woman. He was a worker, knew how to handle livestock and to get the most from the hay meadows along the river bottom. In turn, Old Hat lavished on him all the affection of which her rough but sometimes tender heart was capable.

THE GIRL ETTA was of a different stripe. In her, burned the fires that had made of Joe Ward one beyond the law, a nature wild and adventurous. So it was not surprising that she soon prevailed on her mother to allow her to return to Leadville to work. The "work" in which she soon found profit and excitement was in one of the dives that line First Street, a block from Harrison Avenue. In this roaring boom town, it was the day of the Tabors, of Leadville

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Johnny Brown and the Unsinkable Molly, of measureless wealth and untrammeled revelry.

Not much is known of Etta after that, except that "somewhere back East" where she had drifted, she wrote the second chapter of the story of the tragic Wards by taking her own life.

Existence for Old Hat and Clover settled into the routine of operators of a road house at the Government bridge. The place afforded good meals, beds and horse feed for travelers. Old Hat was cook and waitress, with Clover's help. They were able to hold their own with the mixed clientele of peaceable ranchers, rough freighters, cowboys and others who passed that way. They prospered and their crops and herds increased. It seemed that at last the remaining Wards could enjoy peace and plenty, doing what they enjoyed in surroundings they liked. Then tragedy again struck.

It was June, the season of high water for irrigating the fruitful hay meadows along the banks of the river. To get to some of the meadows a mile or more away, Clover usually either walked or rode a horse. But this year, on a trip to Meeker, he had bought a bicycle. "Wheels," as they were called in those days, were to young fellows then what a new red hot rod is to modern youths.

With irrigating shovel on his shoulder, pushing the pedals with feet encased in heavy rubber boots, Clover rode gaily each day to the fields where he guided the water to the thirsty crops.

This day he was a little late in returning for dinner, so Old Hat stood in the doorway, shading her eyes with a hand, to watch Clover come pedaling down the road and onto the bridge. He grinned and waved as he saw her waiting. Although the bridge floor was forty feet above the flooding river, it had no guard rails. Where the planks of the bridge had been worn by the wheels of many wagons and the hoofs of countless horses, mules, oxen and cattle, repairs had been made by nailing planks diagonally. As Old Hat watched, the front wheel of the bicycle struck one of the diagonal planks. The vehicle shot across the bridge and off the edge. Hat ran screaming, crying and cursing, toward the bridge, as Clover, entangled in the bicycle and weighted down by the heavy rubber irrigating boots, sank into the turgid flood, never to rise. The best of the Wards had perished.

It was a sad and bitter woman who survived. She stayed at the lonely house on the brink of the darkly-flowing Bear, which had robbed her of the only thing she had ever really loved. She no longer operated the road house. Those who called were likely as not to knock on the door in vain. If she did answer, it might be with reeling footsteps, in a half-drunken stupor. She had always been a sparing drinker. Now liquor came in gallon lots, brought from Meeker by the driver of the weekly mail stage.

So it went until Christmas Eve of 1901. That day the stage driver had delivered a fresh gallon jug. Old Hat's one relief from the memories of the past was to lie abed, propped by a pillow, the whisky jug at hand, reading a novel by the fitful yellow light of the kerosene lamp that stood on a chair at the bedside. It must have been that way that Christmas Eve.

While other ranchers decorated their trees with paper chains and festoons of colored paper, and placed at their bases the few and simple gifts, Old Hat lay

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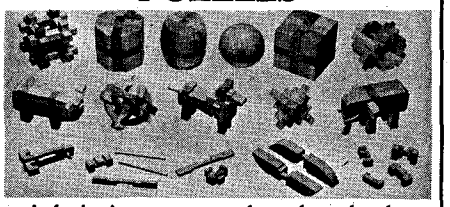

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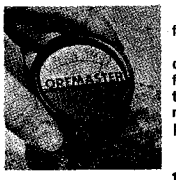

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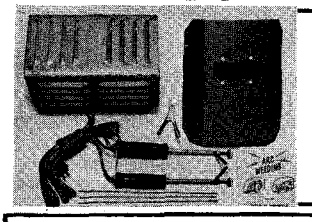

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alone in the huge, bleak house. She must have dozed and perhaps in a wild dream flung out an arm, overturning the lamp. If she awoke at all, it may have been to imagine herself back in the bright and teeming life of Leadville, with all illumined by the dazzling radiance of the raging flames.

The first traveler along that road after Christmas, rounded a bend in the road to stare in amazement at the spot where the big house had stood, but where now only a low pile of still-smouldering ruins remained. The final chapter of the saga of the tragic Wards had been written.

Come Hard, Go Easy Country

(Continued from page 17)

from the different mines was crushed and processed. Mr. Roach used to haul ore from the camp were we stayed to the stamp mill, one load per day making eighteen miles a round trip. Of course, there were a number of other ore wagons hauling too.

I SOON ARRIVED back at camp and what a lonesome and deserted feeling I had. The old building seemed more ghostly than ever, and the windows seemed to be watching me. But I had my burro to keep me company. I put the burro in the corral and fed her, then went into the kitchen to get some supper. I went into the dining room to get the crackers and cheese that we had left on the table and the cheese was almost eaten up by the mice. I forgot to mention that after we moved into camp I believe the mice came from miles around. The camp was just overrun with them. Pack rats, trade rats, you name them and we had them.

I was puzzled about the disappearance of that box of crackers though. The empty box was there and part of the cheese; it was obvious the rats got them —but surely they couldn't eat that many crackers from the time we'd left camp and my return.

After supper I was reading a magazine by the coal-oil lamp. My feet were propped up by the stove to keep them warm, as a cold wind was blowing around the corners of the building. I heard what I thought was the sound of a cracker being eaten. I listened and there it was again, yes, the mystery of the vanishing crackers was about solved.

While the mines were in operation, wood was very scarce here on the desert, and the miners thought it would be cheaper to haul in a large gasoline range, and freight in gasoline instead of hauling wood. As the mines closed down shortly after freighting in the range, it was never used. It sat in a corner of the kitchen. It had a large oven with a false bottom between the oven and floor. I went over and pushed the stove around and out came a mouse. There in a neat little pile were the crackers.

I picked up the whole ones and brushed them off and put them in the grocery box which had a hinge lid on it. I would shudder today to eat crackers that mice had pawed over but out there it was four days' round trip to the nearest store and no way to get there in the first place. You can't be particular; food is food.

The first night we were there, Mr. Roach showed me a little trick on how to keep warm. I never forgot and used it many times. Just take four smooth flat rocks about three inches thick and six or eight inches across, heat them in the oven of the stove or in the campfire, when camping out, wrap them up in about four thicknesses of old newspaper or canvas, put two of them in your blankets at your feet and two by your hips or shoulders, and you will sleep like a bug in a rug. Next morning the rocks were still warm.

Before the rest of the party left, Bill, Jr. called me to one side and said, "You are in charge here now and if any claim jumpers come around, run them off even if you have to use your pistol."

Whether he was kidding me or not I will never know, for no claim jumpers ever came by. I'll admit I was a little lonesome and got a little afraid when wind rattled the windows and doors. I would reach for my small pistol and listen. But all I ever heard was the wind outside.

I slept a little late the next morning. When I got up, I built a fire and went out to feed the burro. To my great surprise I found snow covered everything. It had snowed all night. The snow packed up against the building and the thing that bothered me the most as I went to open the corral gate, it was already open and the burro was gone. I could see his tracks leading back to Bill Keys' place. He had outsmarted me and somehow slipped the rope over the gate post. Now, I was really alone, her leaving. It seemed like I had lost my last friend, as I had begun to like that little burro.

Well, nothing to do but make the best ot it. At least I had a good cabin and grub, plenty to last me until the tenth if I only ate two meals a day. Little did I know that it would be the afternoon of the sixteenth before anyone came for me.

I PUT UP the balance of my location notices and laid around camp, really nothing to do but cook and eat. I spent a lot of time exploring the old mine shafts and tunnels, and did a few foolish things like climbing down mine shafts on old rick-rack ladders. Any one of them could have broken and left me in the bottom of a shaft to starve, but a kid of sixteen uses very little judgment. Otherwise I wouldn't have lost my burro. I would have checked to see if the corral gate was double locked.

In order to keep track of what day it was, I kept a small notebook and marked each day and date down. I was beginning to like being alone. You know the loneliness of the desert grows on one. I prowled around the canyons above the camp. Up the canyon was a mine known as the Black Warrior. In its heyday it was a good producer. The ore ran over $300 per ton. But the Desert Queen that Bill Keys was on, I was told ran as high as $3,000 per ton and that was money in those days.

The Gold Park Consolidated Mine where I was camped was a big operation. Little ore car tracks ran way back in the tunnels. All the equipment in the tool room, blacksmith shop and furniture was there, just as it was at the time the mines closed down.

One morning I went up a draw east of camp and found a number of empty turtle shells. I was told later they probably got battered and drowned in a cloudburst. In another draw I found two sets of wild sheep horns. On one of my exploring trips in a mine shaft I thought I had struck it rich. I saw shiny specks that looked like gold in the quartz. I hurried up the ladder and ran to camp for some tools, and started to pick away at the quartz. I even brought a gunny-sack along to carry up my gold! For a few days I worked the mine each day. I piled the ore in front of the cook house and I wondered why the company had quit a mine with such rich ore in it.

Well, the tenth of January finally rolled around and I got everything ready to go back to civilization. My grub was getting low and so was the water barrel. But no one showed up so I cut down on the balance of my food. Put myself on only one small meal a day.

At night I would sit by the stove playing a harmonica and pretty soon the little mice would peek around and watch me. I would break up a cracker and put it across the kitchen from me and they would slip out and get the crumbs. They were not a bit afraid as long as you didn't throw anything at them. The trade rats stayed their distance, watching the little mice at play.

Reminded me of a story old Chuckawalla Wilson told me the first night we arrived at Twentynine Palms and I had paid him a visit. He said when he first came to the desert forty-five years before he was almost run out of camp by the pack rats. They chewed up his ropes, ate his grub, in fact, just about took over. He found trapping them was no good—too many of them. Poison would work for a little while but they soon learned to avoid it. At last he hit on an idea he thought would work. He built a trap of chickenwire mesh so he could catch the rats alive. He caught a few medium-size rats but turned them loose, because he was waiting to catch the largest rat of the bunch.

Finally he had luck. One morning he looked in the trap and there he was. He was the largest billy of the rat clan. Wilson fed him and made quite a pet of him. Then he cut off one of the rats' ears, doctored it up and then he cut the other ear. When it healed he cut off the rat's tail. Finally he painted the big rat with spots of white paint and turned him loose. He naturally took off for his old haunts.

Not knowing how furious he looked, in every rat-run he entered the rest of the rats would take off in fear of him. After a while he got mad at the other rats for not having anything to do with him. So when each one of them would take off he would run it down and kill it. Soon all that was left was Wilson's pet rat and he lived to a ripe old age.

MR. ROACH told me old Chuckawalla Wilson at one time sold a mining claim for $20,000 cash. He took off for Los Angeles and put up at a hotel on First and Main Street where most of the mining men stayed when in town. Before he went on his spending spree he bought a team of mules, new harness and wagon, and paid the livery stable man in advance to keep them in good shape until he called for them.

He put in a large order at a general merchandise store for groceries, clothes, and boots, and barley for the mules. Then he was off for a real time.

It was not long before the girls at the hotel, and the leeches around the bar, were Wilson's best pals. As long as Chuckawalla was handing out the double eagles across the bar and putting on a big feed each night for the girls in the dining room, nothing was too good for him. The $20,000 he got from the sale of his claim only lasted fourteen days. When he awoke one morning broke, he

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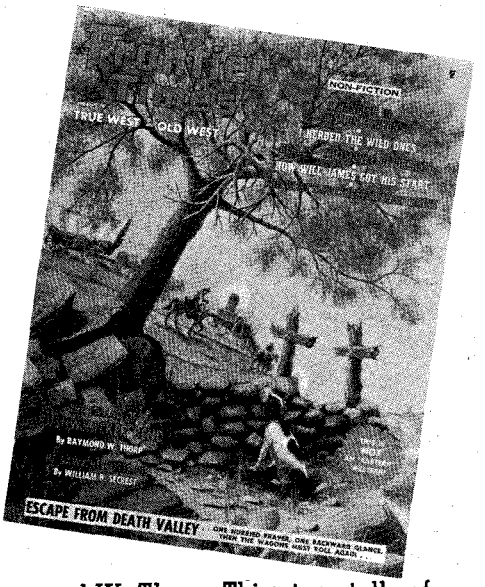

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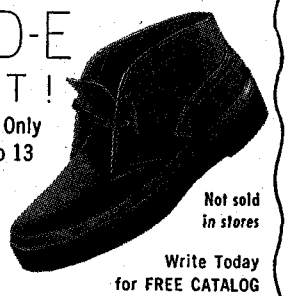

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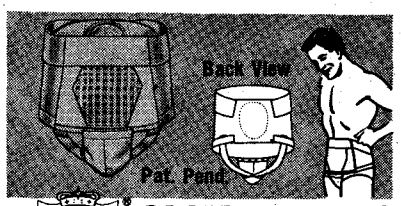

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was good for a couple of free drinks at the bar and that was it. His fair-weather friends seemed to have all disappeared.

Chuckawalla was soon on his way back to Twentynine Palms driving a good span of mules and with supplies to last him a long time. What more could a prospector ask for? He was sure to make another strike before long.

One day one of the mules stepped in a hole and broke a leg and Chuckawalla had to shoot him. He traded the wagon and harness off and used his one mule to ride or pack with. "Come hard and go easy" was his code.

Mr. Roach told me one time old Chuckawalla was really down on his luck, no more bacon or flour or coffee—just a handful of beans and things looked pretty rough. A mining company southeast of Twentynine Palms had just put a young green mining engineer in charge. Old Chuckawalla shaved and cleaned up, put on his best bib and tucker, put a pack saddle on the mule and started out to visit the young engineer. He waited until he was sure the freighters were on the road and then hid out in a gully close to camp.

When the coast was clear he came into camp and introduced himself as a Mr. Wilson of the Wilson Mining Company. The young engineer was very impressed that such an important man should call on him. Then old Chuckawalla put on the squeeze. He told the young man his freight wagon was two days overdue and his camp was short of food. No doubt his teamster on the freight wagon must have gone on a bender, but he should be showing up in a day or two. Could the engineer spare him enough groceries to hold his camp over until his wagon came through? The young man was delighted to help a neighbor.

Well, that poor mule never carried such a heavy load before in his life. Chuckawalla took to the sagebrush back to his dugout to avoid being seen but one of the ore wagon drivers spotted Chuckawalla and asked the young engineer where old Wilson made the haul of groceries.

"Why, I loaned Mr. Wilson some food to carry his new crew and himself over until his freight wagon showed up."

"Well," replied the teamster, "you will have a long time to wait. Old Chuckawalla never had a freight wagon."

The young man took the joke on himself in his stride. He knew if he kicked up any trouble for Wilson he would be laughed off the desert.

ACCORDING to my book it had got to be the morning of the sixteenth and as yet no one had shown up to bring me out. My food supply was down to part of a slab of bacon and a little flour, and one can of condensed milk. I thought I would stay for another day, then if no one showed up, I would take my bedroll and what bacon was left and start hiking out. I figured to stop and see Wilson and make camp a night at the adobe at Twentynine Palms, then hike on to Warren's Ranch and wait there.

I was out looking over my pile of gold ore and feeling sorry for myself. I had no way of getting it out. Suddenly I heard a rig coming up the canyon and here came the same black team and buckboard that Roach, Jr. had driven from Banning. It was being driven by an old Indian. This was about 3 p.m. six days later than they were supposed to have come for me. I was glad to see him but felt a little sad on having to leave. I had grown to feel at home in the old deserted camp.

The Indian told me to get my things ready as fast as I could, for he wanted to camp back at the adobe at Twentynine Palms that night. That didn't take long as each morning I had fixed my bedroll ready to go. I asked the Indian could I load on some of my gold ore and showed him the pile I had hauled up from the mine shaft. He picked up a piece and looked at it and started laughing. I couldn't see anything funny to laugh at until he said, "Boy, this is fools' gold."

Well, that about took the wind out of my sails. All that work for nothing. Still, I should have known they wouldn't have left real gold in the shaft.

"Let me show you the difference between real gold and fools' gold," he said as he picked up a piece. "See how bright this is when the light hits it? Now, turn the bright side over to the shadow and see how dark it turns. Now if that was real gold it would be bright in the shadow as well as in the light." So I learned a good lesson and all I lost was a little hard work.

He let me take my wild sheep horns and a few pieces of fools' gold and I bade good-bye to the camp that had been my home for a few lonesome but pleasant days.

Around dusk we arrived at the adobe at Twentynine Palms. I took what little food I had left over to old Chuckawalla Wilson and the poor old man was sure glad to get it, only sorry I didn't have more to give him. That is the last time I ever saw him. I heard later he got so he could hardly get around and someone came out and brought him to San Bernardino where he died in the county hospital. So another real old-timer passed on, and he told me he had prospected for many a year.

When he was seventeen years old he had a contract to deliver mail from the Pueblo of Los Angeles to Santa Barbara by horseback, making the trip twice a month. He quit when he heard of the Lost Padre Mine from old Indian women at Warren's Ranch where we stopped over for a good supper and slept in the hay.

WE WERE UP early next morning and drove until about eleven o'clock. While the team rested we made a quick meal. Around dusk we made Banning. At the livery stable I asked the proprietor if Bill, Jr. had wired any money for my train fare back to Los Angeles, as I only had one thin dime in my pocket.

"Hell, no," he said, "I had to pay this man $2 a day to go after you and Bill still owes me for the team and rig when he was here over two weeks ago. You are sure lucky I found a man here in Banning that knew how to find you."

So it seemed like my troubles were not over yet, for it's a long way from Banning to Los Angeles with only a dime in your pocket.

The Indian was very nice to me. He had me go over to a small adobe where he lived and I met his wife. We had a nice supper of beans, steak and coffee. I stayed the night and had breakfast next morning and he said, "Come on over, maybe we can talk the livery man into giving you enough money for your train fare."

But when the livery man asked if I had anything for collateral I told him

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only my blankets and a small pearl-handled pistol. He looked at the gun and said, "All right, leave everything and I'll let you have the money for fare."

Later that day the Indian walked down to the depot with me and while we were waiting for the train to pull in, he asked me how much money I had coming from Bill Roach.

I said, "$30.00." Then he asked me if I would like to make some easy money. "Sure," I said.

"Well, when you get your money, buy two cases of whiskey. You can get twenty-four pints for $11.00. Buy two suitcases and put the whiskey in it but don't put them in the baggage car with your bedroll. Keep them in the smoker with you and drop me a line before you start back and I will meet you at the depot and we will take the whiskey to my place. I can get $2.00 a pint for it from the Indians. That will put some money in our pockets.

"I have my horse and saddle and I can get you a saddle and horse cheap from an Indian friend of mine who has a little spread in the mountains. Then we will go out in back of Grey Back Mountain. I know where a lot of wild cattle have wandered in the canyons and on part of the desert that don't belong to anyone. We can drive a few head out on some back trails that only I know where they are. I know a butcher who has a small slaughterhouse. He will buy all we can bring him and no questions asked."

I asked him if the cattle didn't belong to some ranch and he said they did at one time, but they were wild now and didn't really belong to anyone. So I agreed to the deal. For a kid of sixteen that was real adventure.

As the train pulled in, we shook hands on it and I boarded and made my way up front to the smoker. I got a seat on the depot side, stuck my head out the window, and waved goodbye to my friend as the train pulled out. That was the last time I ever saw him.

When I reached Los Angeles I went to collect my money from Bill Roach; but each time I showed up at his office he would stall me. I finally gave it up. One thing he did do for me was to have my bedroll and pistol sent to me from Banning. I believe he would have paid me my wages but I don't think he had it. Selling wild mining stock for a living wasn't too easy.

I really want to thank him for not paying me, for I surely would of embarked on that wild adventure with my Indian friend if he had. In a way, Bill Roach kept us both out of trouble. Instead of sitting here in my home writing this, I might have been on the inside looking out.

ANSWERS:

1. **Typewriter.** *KSTC Museum, Hays, Kansas*
2. **Fluting iron.** *Sandhills Museum, Valentine, Nebraska*
3. **Strap-on ice shoes for horses.** *Sandhills Museum, Valentine, Nebraska*
4. **Butter mold.** *Author's Collection*
5. **Warning flare.** *Harbaugh Museum, Wellington, Kansas*
6. **Clothes stomper.** *Sandhills Museum, Valentine, Nebraska*
7. **Ink well.** *Simpson Collection*
8. **Nutmeg grater.** *Hastings Museum, Hastings, Nebraska*
9. **.32 calibre blowgun cane.** *Harbaugh Museum, Wellington, Kansas* *(See below)*
10. **Live coal tongs.** *Harbaugh Museum, Wellington, Kansas*
11. **Soda fountain.** *Wichita, Kansas Historical Museum*

*NOTE to 9: The .32 calibre blowgun cane fired a standard .32 calibre bullet. The firing pin was activated and released by a hard burst of air. The cane could be fired by blowing strongly into the funnel-shaped head, or by clapping the palm of the hand sharply against the same funnel.

Buck Jones—Bona Fide Hero

(Continued from page 21)

tried to change his name to Charles Jones, and then Charles Buck Jones because plain "Buck" wasn't sophisticated enough. Nobody liked the idea, least of all Buck, so back to Buck Jones it went and he legally adopted this name on July 1, 1937.

Some of Buck Jones' leading ladies read like a Who's Who of the Cinema: Winifred Westover (who married William S. Hart), Vivian Rich, Marguerite de la Motte, and the most famous of them all, Carole Lombard, who was just sixteen when she made her film debut with him in "Hearts and Spurs."

In 1926 Buck visited England with his wife and was amazed to learn that over there he ranked in popularity with Tom Mix. Unlike Mix, however, he did not bring Silver, so could not ride up the steps of the Mansion House to meet London's Lord Mayor for lunch as Tom and Tony had!

Back in the United States Buck heard that William S. Hart had decided to retire. Producer trouble and income tax demands were alleged to have been part of Hart's reasons, but another was that although his Westerns were realistic and excellent (even by today's standards), the public didn't want him anymore. They preferred the hard-riding fast-action pictures turned out by Jones and Mix. In fact, apart from Ken Maynard, they had only one serious rival for the next four years. This was Fred Thomson, an ex-wartime chaplain who rode to fame on a large grey Irish Hunter named Silver King. In less than two years Thomson had skyrocketed to fame only to die tragically following surgery on December 25, 1928.

WHEN SOUND MOVIES came in, Westerns went into a temporary decline, and Buck Jones was one of the few who successfully made the transition from silent films to sound. The going was hard, however, so he decided to leave pictures, and formed the Buck Jones Wild West Show. This venture proved a failure, and almost broke he turned back to Hollywood to find that he was very much in demand. Tom Mix's return to the screen in "Destry Rides Again" was not a success, and Mix was destined to make very few sound appearances, one of the last being a serial called "The Miracle Rider." Universal Studios was anxious to find a replacement and chose Buck Jones.

By 1935 Westerns were booming again and Buck was the undisputed "King of the Cowboys." He formed his own production company releasing through Uni-

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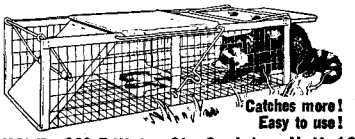

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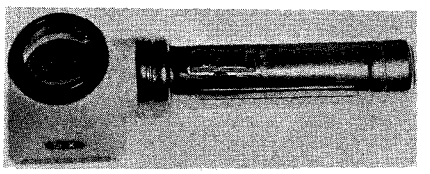

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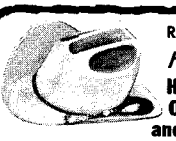

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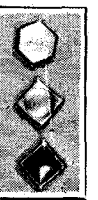

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versal and Columbia, and supervised his scripts to insure that excessive violence was avoided and that the finished picture would have an appeal for all ages. A Buck Jones Production was simply that.

Unlike Tom Mix, off screen Buck was a quiet, studious person. He rarely wore cowboy clothes in public because he felt it looked as if he were showing off. He lived quietly on his ranch in the San Fernando Valley and was devoted to his wife and daughter. To millions of kids everywhere Buck Jones was the personification of the hero, a fact that may puzzle this generation which has no time for hero-worship. So great was his popularity that when he organized the Buck Jones Rangers, the world-wide membership soon exceeded three million. Silver shared his fame and became a featured player in every picture. There were, in fact, four horses which bore the name, but it was the original Silver that was to remain Buck's special pet even when he retired the horse in 1937.

Anxious never to offend his young fans, Buck Jones devoted his time to writing and producing pictures which would appeal to them. The hero-worship they extended to him meant a great deal. When a small boy named Joe Collins fell from an apartment window in the Bronx, and severely injured himself, he amazed his doctors by stating, "I'm not going to cry. Buck Jones wouldn't cry."

Buck was so touched that he arranged for the presentation of a radio to the boy and personally flew to New York to see him. In fact, the presence of his idol contributed much to the boy's recovery.

Youngsters from all over the United States and overseas fashioned their lives on Buck Jones. Some even ran away from home and went to Hollywood convinced that Buck would put them on the road to fame. Usually the screen star was able to convince them of the pitfalls ahead and put them on the road home to a more normal life.

His own prowess as a sportsman was a strong factor in his publicity. Buck was an accomplished boxer and yachtsman (he took part in several big races with his eighty-five-foot diesel-engined schooner *Sartaria)* as well as a pilot and racing car enthusiast. By 1938 he was at the peak of his fame, and even when the singing cowboy, Gene Autry, came on the scene Buck had little cause for worry.

When Tom Mix was killed in a car crash on October 11, 1940, Buck, saddened by his old friend's death, readily agreed to accept a small part in Universal's mammoth fifteen-part serial "Riders of Death Valley," which was to be dedicated to Mix, and as a special tribute to Buck, part of the theme music was called *Buck Jones' Ride.* Starring with Buck was Dick Foran, Leo Carrillo, Charles Bickford, and Buck's son-in-law, Noah Beery, Jr., who had married Maxine, on March 30, 1940. "Riders of Death Valley" proved to be Buck's last serial, perhaps his most famous being "White Eagle" made for Columbia back in 1933.

In 1941 Buck played two entirely different roles—as a villain in Chester Morris' "Wagons Westward" and the lead in a new series for Monogram called "The Rough Riders." The Rough Riders series is on record as being one of the most successful ever produced in Hollywood. Teamed opposite Colonel Tim McCoy and Raymond Hatton, Buck made eight action-packed pictures. Ironically, his last film was "Dawn on the Great Divide," released early in 1943.

THE ENTRY of America into World War II meant a busy time for Buck Jones. Along with other movie stars, he combined his numerous radio and personal appearances with bond-selling tours to aid the war effort.

"He sold millions of dollars' worth, and autographed every bond sold," Mrs. Jones recalled.

On November 15, 1942, he left Hollywood and went East on another bond-selling tour. At Philadelphia, on November 26, he was made grand marshal of Uncle Wip's Toyland Parade, and then he was off to Boston.

During the afternoon of Saturday, November 28, Buck visited a children's hospital. This was an unscheduled stop as he had originally intended to go to New York prior to returning home. But he was asked if he would visit the hospital, and immediately agreed. Later in the evening he was the guest of honor at a dinner held at the Cocoanut Grove night club. The place was crowded with people, many of them youngsters celebrating the result of a college football game.

Suddenly the place was filled with smoke and flames. Someone, later alleged to be a fifteen-year-old boy, had brushed a cigarette against one of the palm leaves which surrounded the walls and it burst into flames. As panic spread and exits became jammed, many were trampled, burned or suffocated. Buck Jones got out unharmed, but immediately fought his way back to help the injured and became himself a victim.

Some 491 people died that night and Buck Jones was one of the 181 critically burned victims taken to the city hospital. For two days doctors fought to save his life, but on the afternoon of November 30, Buck Jones was dead. The tragedy was to shock not only Hollywood, but his fans all over the world.

I vividly recall the morning of December 1, when, as a small boy in England, I listened to the B.B.C.'s morning news and was horrified to hear that Buck Jones was dead. At that moment something of my boyhood also died.

Buck's body was flown back to California where it was cremated. "Buck's ashes were strewn over the ocean that he loved so much by his dearest and best friend," Mrs. Jones told me. "This was his wish."

The full impact of the star's death came to his family some months later when his original Silver, who had pined for him, began to weaken. "I had to put him to sleep in 1943," Mrs. Jones recalled sadly. "It seemed he missed Buck, and stopped eating. We hand-fed him, but he kept going downhill and that was the only thing to do. He was very old for a horse—thirty-four years. The others I kept until I had to do the same. They are all buried on the ranch with markers.

"I still have Buck's silver and gold mounted saddle and all the trappings, including his gold and silver gun and belt. Someday I may give them to my grandson, Buck Beery, if he is still interested in horses—at the moment he has turned to cars."

The revolver she referred to was Buck's Colt single action army model of 1873, the 5½-inch barrel version. Purchased for a Christmas present to Buck in 1925, it was engraved by Edward H.

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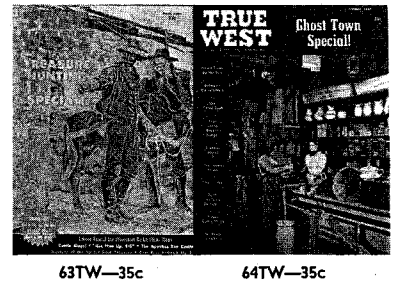

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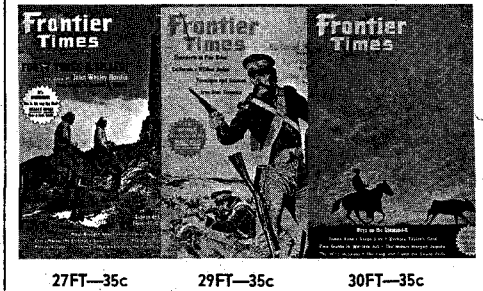

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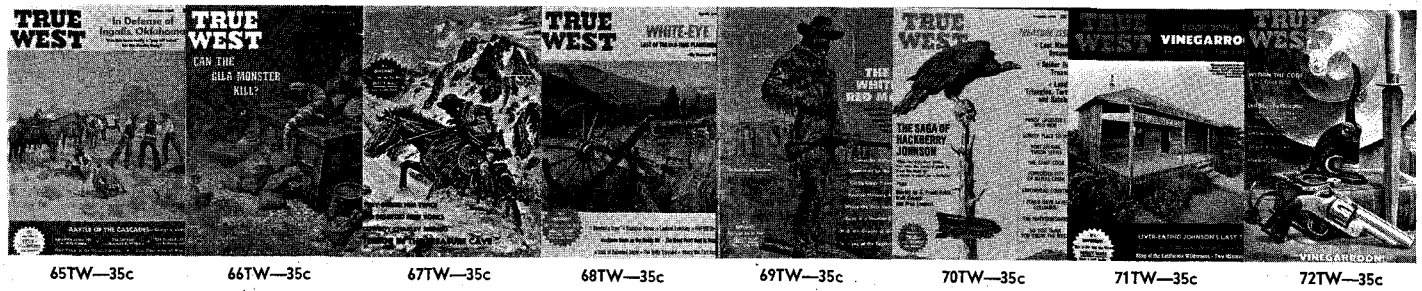

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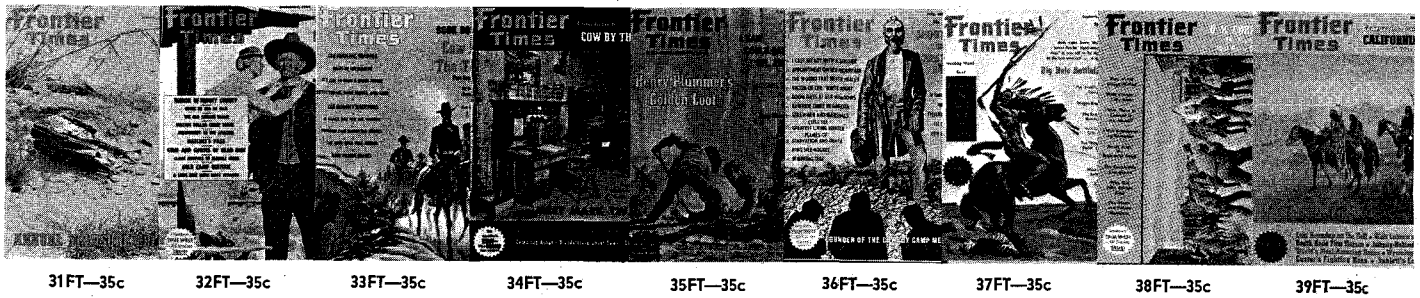

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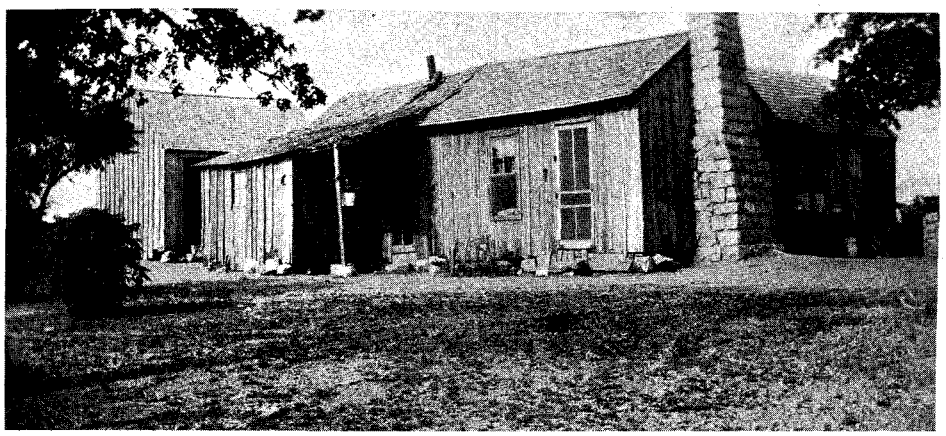

When the Sems family first moved to the Flying H Bar Ranch, they lived in the weathered house above until Mr. Sems could build a new one.

Bohlin. Serial number 139166 (which dates it about 1891), the revolver has ivory grips inlaid with gold, silver and enamel. On the right-hand grip is a diamond-shaped inlay with "Buck" engraved on it and on the left side a similar inlay engraved "Dell." The remainder of the revolver is engraved with silver inlay. Mrs. Jones told me that she keeps the revolver in a hand-carved leather case which bears the date she presented it to him. The only time Buck used it was for parades and personal appearances.

For Mrs. Buck Jones her husband's memory has never dimmed, because she is constantly reminded of him by people in all walks of life. "I never realized so many people still remembered him," she told me with pride. "He was such a wonderful guy." The Cowboy Hall of Fame in Oklahoma also remembered Buck, and Mrs. Jones was asked to present a large framed portrait of him for permanent preservation in its collection.

Buck Jones is far from forgotten. He has earned his place among the immortals of the Old West. True, his Westerns may have followed the Hollywood pattern, but in his way he made a genuine contribution toward keeping alive traditions and memories of the old days and the people who lived back then.

It was fitting that Buck Jones, whose dash, charm and verve endeared him to millions, should die a hero. But the tragic manner of his death inspired perhaps his finest epitaph when W. H. Mooring, the Hollywood correspondent for the English movie magazine *Picturegoer* wrote, "I dare bet Buck Jones didn't go to a night club once in five years. Odd he should have made his last roundup among all the tinsel of city night life. He belonged so completely to the orange grove, the nearby corral and the horses."

Mexican Bullion on the Flying H Bar Ranch

(Continued from page 39)

pletely destroyed without even a photograph being made, as they continued digging. They felt sure this was the entrance to the underground village and treasure, but nothing else was found at that precise spot.

A number of other copper knives, cut from the same type of thin copper sheeting, were found close by, and everything was buried in the same preservative—pulverized oiled charcoal.

By this time digging was taking on major proportions and my dad could not do it alone. Two other men came to help, Bill Hodge and John Hart. The latter was the father of Sam Hart who had originally brought Mr. Arnold to our place. There were no contracts, only verbal agreements that each would share in the treasure when it was found.

A few months later, Mr. Arnold had a Mexican friend come and survey the work being done, look over the general area, and read the plat rock. He read this exactly like Mr. Arnold had. This Mexican bluntly said that no treasure would ever be found because it was guarded by evil spirits. He left and would have no part in it.

Later and at long intervals between, other Mexicans came. They, too, would read the plat rock exactly as had Mr. Arnold. And all were unanimous in their opinions—no treasure would ever be found because of evil spirits.

Whether or not their predictions or beliefs were true it is difficult to say, but friction arose among the workers. Mr. Arnold and John Hart began carrying heavy revolvers. No one would cooperate with Mr. Arnold who was the only one who held the key to the mystery and the only one who had the knowledge to direct them.

I have always believed if he had been treated differently, perhaps something of more value might have been found. Surely these things were not put there without some purpose.

Friction became so acute that Mr. Arnold left and, with him gone, there was no one to supervise the digging. For a few months, however, it continued at random.

In the meantime Mr. Arnold returned briefly but he was upset and disturbed. He and his wife had secured a divorce, and things never were the same again among the workers or with the digging. Arnold seemed to have almost lost interest. He would show up occasionally and remain for a short period, but he took no active part in the work again.

ON ONE of his brief visits he took me with him to cut some copper "trimmings" out of a tree. We came to one old oak where he stopped, looked and "sighted," then walked briskly to another. He pointed to a mark on this tree and remarked to me, "See this mark? This means to go east ten *varas*."

He stepped off these *varas* which led to another old oak, the mark on which meant so many *varas* south. When he stepped them off we came to another old

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oak. I presume the mark on the last tree meant the termination point, because he said this was the place. Originally two oak trees had grown from one stump, but years before one had been cut down. Between these two trees was a cradle-like indentation in the stump. Mr. Arnold took the ax which he had with him, chopped into the stump indentation, and came to a hollow place. He reached inside and pulled out a handful of copper trimmings which he gave to me.

As children, we played in the mounds of earth near the excavations and found numerous small strange objects which Mr. Arnold called prayer beads. We picked them up by the dozens, played with them for a day, then discarded them. No one seemed to realize their historical value and all of them were lost.

At this point there was an influx of short-period workers. Bill Hodge and John Hart stayed on, for they seemed reluctant to give up although they had no idea where to dig. Someone suggested there was a Mrs. Matlock living at Abilene who was a clairvoyant—possibly she could go in a trance, see the treasure and give them directions. She did come, and went in a trance several times during which she directed a lot of hodge-podge digging, but nothing more was found.

Again Mr. Arnold returned briefly, and asked my parents if he could look at the plat rock once more. They trusted him completely, but to our surprise after he left, the plat rock, the two other stones, all the copper knives and everything that had been found were gone, too. He had deliberately taken them away from us. Mr. Arnold may have felt that they belonged to him because he was instrumental in finding them, even though they were found on my dad's property. This was the last time anyone saw Mr. Arnold. He was never even heard of again.

Workers became few and digging lagged. Bill Hodge and John Hart stayed on until John Hart and his wife were divorced. Then after a few months, work was abandoned.

Several years later Gurney Ward from Abilene became interested. He planned everything on a large scale, drew up contracts, and sold shares in the treasure —if and when found—to raise funds to finance the work. A large crew of pick and shovel men was employed. The men lived in tents near the digging site.

Mr. Ward began his excavation about 300 feet east of the original diggings. Dad had told him about the abundance of water at twenty-nine feet and Ward planned to avoid this hazard by digging nearly to that depth, then making tunnels in different directions. This, of course, did not always solve the problem. There were cave-ins, too, but fortunately no one was killed.

After a year or two, Mr. Ward began running short of funds. There was friction in his family, and he and his wife were divorced. The only thing he ever found was water. He had installed pumps and a windmill to lower the level so digging could continue, but to no avail. The water just would not lower.

When Mr. Ward and his crew of workers left, they took everything except the windmill. A few months afterward, a bolt of lightning struck the windmill tower and split it to the ground.

In the 1920s, James and Laura Miller took over the project. I believe they also came from Abilene, and she was a clair-

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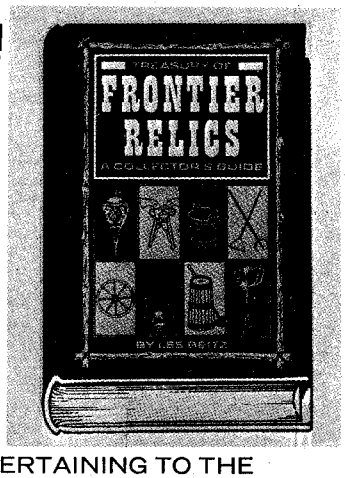

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voyant. Their funds were meager, their crew of pick and shovel men small, and I think they abandoned hope in less than a year. Then James Miller and his wife were divorced.

The idea of evil spirits putting a curse on the people who worked there seems ridiculous, and I cannot accept it. Nevertheless, there was a divorce and unhappiness in the family of every man who had a major part in seeking the underground village.

Work now has been abandoned for many years. My parents have passed away, their estate divided, and the hidden treasure still remains a mystery.

Truly Western

(Continued from page 4)

this man's leg was very swollen and very black. This was between 12:00 and 1:00. Jake took charge immediately, taking the man into his house.

Now, out of 262 cases cured by Jake's stone and 2 lost because the patients got to him too late, there had never been a run-in with the law until this one and only instance.

It so happened that there was a doctor's convention in town at the time. A Pasteur Institute doc from Kansas City (so it was said) had Jake arrested for practicing medicine without a license. News those days traveled fast and by the time they had him in court there was the banker (E. L. Myers), the mayor, the D. A., and several other citizens on hand to go Jake's bail ($10,000). The banker offered to go it, but Jake said to the surprise of everybody, "Just vouch for my check; I have $10,000 in your bank and then some." The Pasteur man claimed the stone was a myth—an old wives' tale and a menace. But he dropped the charge like a hot potato.

All this time Jake's wife carried on with the bitten man. She was an herbalist and while Jake took care of the stone, she made a brew for a more speedy recovery. There was not one bite of solid food given the patient while the stone drew at the wound.

Between Jake's stone and his wife's brew, they got fast results. This man from Haven was eating watermelon on the front porch in two days, cured.

In 1922 I asked Jake to show me the stone. It was a rather startling jolt to me when I beheld it. I did not touch it; it seemed uncanny to me. Jake held it close to my eyes for a good look. It was about as big as a small bantam chicken egg—very dark brown, with a crust about 1/8 inch thick. One end had an opening about as big as a quarter. The opening was reamed out a bit and was very smooth and polished like the whole stone was. The stone was full of a reddish, compact mass of hair as solid as felt.

To quote Jake, "This stone has been in my grandfather's hands for fifty years and was found in the bones of a deer that had died of old age. This was in Virginia (where he did not say). It was handed down from one relative to another until I got it."

He had a very large book, black leather bound, with every case the stone had been used on. There was items like $1.00 and a name and date, a ham here and an axe there, as he named a few payments. But Jake never asked a thin dime for the use of the stone.

To again quote Jake, "Only 2 cases were lost and they were too late. It works like this. The stone is boiled in sweet milk until the milk comes white, then the stone is purified of poison and again applied. When it has absorbed all the virus it can hold, it sweats and begins to creep away from the wound. Again the milk is boiled, and the green poison in it is flushed away. This stone never lies. If there is virus from rabies it sticks; if not, it just slides away."

There were cases of blood poisoning, carbuncles, boils, and snakebites in the book. Some of those Kansas rattlers were whoppers, I know!

In '23 we came out here to California. Jake left Hutchinson I heard and went to Washington (Seattle, I think). Where the stone is today I have no idea. On the following Monday after the Haven case, Jake was offered $500 for the stone, but he knew who had offered it. The bidder was acting for the medic and he put two and two together. He told him, "If Doc gets this stone, I know what he would do to it, so run along."

Jake performed some really amazing feats with safes and locks and his stone. —H. Shuler, Box 466, Ridgecrest, California.

Doll Stuffing

Dear Joe:

My husband and I have an antique doll shop here in Laguna Beach. In an old rag doll we found, as part of the stuffing, a copy of the *Boston Press and Post* of May 4, 1849. Perhaps some of the news items in it would interest your readers:

"Steamship *Europa* left New York on Wednesday for Liverpool with 155 passengers, among whom were some chiefs of the Ojibbewa Indians."

"Mr. Buchanan, the only survivor of a company of seven, which left New York for California by the Mexican route, has arrived at New Orleans on the steamer *Hetzel*. His comrades all perished."

"California: At San Francisco on the 6th of March the weather was cold and there was snow on the placers above; but little gold was received, and business was dull. Gold was scarce at $15 per ounce. The *California* steamer was there, deserted by her crew, as before reported. Steamer *Oregon* arrived at San Blas, March 22, and sailed directly for San Francisco."—Eileen Kahn, 1753 South Coast Boulevard, Laguna Beach, California.

Battle Site

Dear Sir:

I wonder if any of your readers could give me any information regarding the following: About a quarter of a mile east from this little town, there is an historical marker which tells about a hill known as "Massacre Butte." The marker states that a wagontrain, composed of twelve men and women, were attacked and massacred by a band of Blood Indians led by a warrior called Medicine Calf. Only one man was identified and his name was John Hoise. This happening took place in 1867. This wagontrain was supposed to be part of an expedition led by a Captain Fiske and was bound from Minnesota. They had split up in Montana.

I have spoken to people here who claim that they can remember when it was possible to find old pieces of wagons, wheels, etc., on this site.—Douglas Lowe, General Delivery, Cowley, Alta., Canada.

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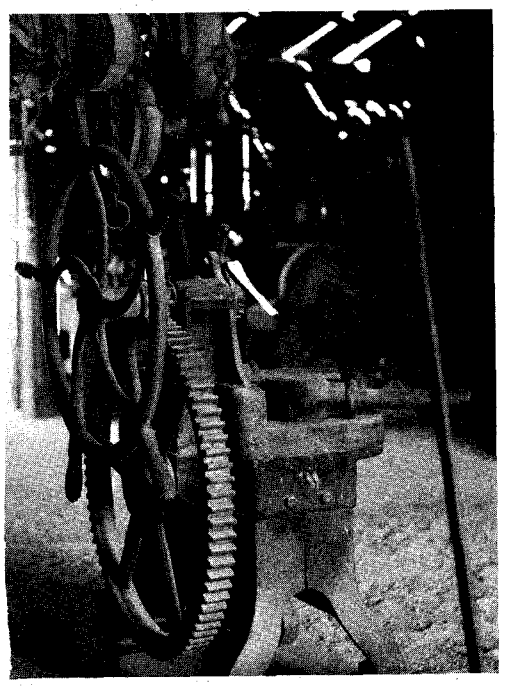


Tire shrinker in Alf's Blacksmith Shop, Daggett, California. Built in 1880, the shop and all equipment therein are in good repair due to the mild, dry climate.

Help Needed Soon!

Dear Friends of True West:

In the August, 1963 issue on Page 46 you published an article about our pioneer town of Daggett and our old blacksmith shop. We surely appreciated it and got quite a bit of publicity from the many people who came here. Now they come by the bus-load—fifty people at a time—it is lots of work and we need help so bad.

I am enclosing a picture of a tire shrinker used for the big wagons. We have this big piece of machinery in our blacksmith shop. I doubt that many people have seen one.

Daggett is the most unique and practical place imaginable for a retirement village, with all of the major buildings already here. All we need to get started is a nice group with enough cash to take hold. There is an old general store they could buy and run for their own benefit and they should have their own restaurant, etc. all run by the retired people. We also have a nice, almost new, church and a recreation area they could buy, with a house and trees built by Helen Muir when she lived here.

We have 2,000 feet altitude—just right, doctors say, for asthma and respiratory complaints—a high, clear, sunny atmosphere, no fog or smog. Surely some group or a few well-financed people could develop this wonderful historical area. If we do not get help by June, I understand the old stone hotel will be torn down and that is the largest building left.—Mrs. Walter S. Alf, P. O. Box 36, Daggett, California.

The Trickery of Nature

Dear Joe:

If I may, I would like to put my two cents worth in this Lost Mine controversy. I happen to know from experience that a small mine, prospect, working, whatever you may call it, can very easily be lost. Mother Nature has a way of covering the scars that has been put on her in a very few years. You can walk right over some and never know.

I have an instrument that can, and does, detect a hidden gold or silver vein. I was prospecting with this machine in Nevada, when I received a full reading. After marking the spot of the highest reading, I sat down for a smoke about twenty feet from my marker. As I sat there I couldn't see any evidence of any workings or anything out of the ordinary.

I noticed a couple of rocks near my feet under a bush and I kicked one down the hill. Then I noticed this small bent square can that was between the two rocks. The contents contained the remains of a lode claim. Some of the writing was still visible, I made out the words "Blue Star—lode" and "18—."

This kind of shocked me. I couldn't for the life of me see any signs of workings, but after walking around the area about five times I could see the picture. A small hill was the tailings, the head of the small ravine was the source. I may add that the sage made a perfect camouflage.

There are hundreds of small high grade mines where a prospector worked and was killed, or couldn't return for many reasons, that are out there in those barren mountains for the finding, believe me.—Leslie Jefferson, 5042 Kahn Way, Carmichael, California.

I Remember . . .

Hi Westerners:

Your magazines of the West and frontier times sure do hit my nerve center. Even the advertisements are good to read. My biggest regret is that I didn't listen more closely to the stories (and dates) of the experiences my parents told when I was young.

My father was a soldier stationed at Fort Randall, South Dakota, and built the first church there. My father was worshipped by the Indians and my mother made real friends of the Indian women who were left widows by their husband's imprisonment.

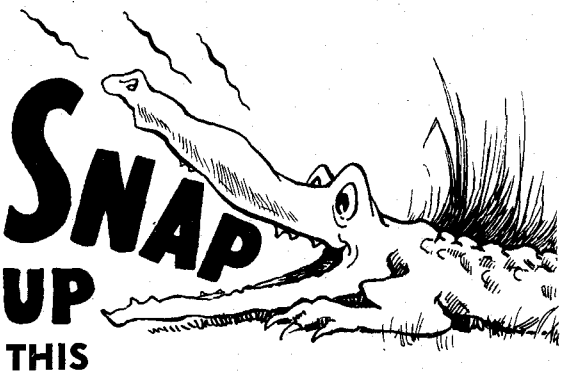
Sitting Bull was my parents' friend. Mother fed him the first chicken and noodles that he ever ate. She told us how he sat on the floor of her kitchen and she filled the old fashioned "soup plate" until he could hold no more. He thought it was the best thing he had ever eaten and wanted to know more about it. He asked her if it wasn't a dish of "angle worms." She told him no—that she made them.

He didn't seem to want to believe that because he couldn't understand how she got them all one size; so she had to take egg and flour and roll out the dough and show him how she cut it to make them uniform.

Mother fed officers there, too, at that time. My parents ranked high with the Indians and at this late date I would hesitate to relate some of Sitting Bull's information for fear it might reflect on the old leader's sincerity. My father's and mother's advice have brought me more than one sincere Indian friend.

My folks moved from there over into Nebraska and my father took his No. 1 homestead at what is now the town of Lynch. He built a fine home, which is standing yet but has been remodeled. I grew up there and was married very young to a fine man. His folks were supposed to have had the largest sod house in western Nebraska then. Those were the good old days.—Mrs. Ida Derr, Star Route 1, Box 12, Chehalis, Washington.

(Continued on page 72)



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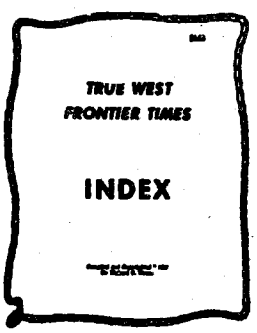

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A small edifice in De Lamar

Truly Western

(Continued from page 69)

Taxes on Ghost Sites

Dear Editor:

I was amused by Mr. Walter Gann's description of the "little houses" in Brownwood, Texas.

Enclosed is a picture of a similar, if smaller, edifice in the old ghost town of De Lamar, Idaho. It was built on two large beams overhanging Jordan Creek. I always wondered what the placer miners panning gold downstream thought about this one.

Ghost towns have long been a hobby of mine. I can sympathize with Patricia Engstrom on her thoughts of Bodie, California. But this is the price we pay for progress. I'm against deliberate vandalism, but a good share of the wrecking of ghost towns is done quite legitimately.

A lot of building material is salvaged by legal owners. In some instances the buildings were razed to lower taxes on land the owners wished to hang onto. I believe Aurora, Nevada, Bodie's sister city, was a victim of this. I've heard land owners in Silver City, Idaho, complain about taxes on buildings that had great value historically but no actual cash value.

I believe that if the state is unwilling to take over these historical sites, as they've done at Bodie, they should at least give the owners a tax break as an incentive to preserve them.—Ross Walton, 875 West 6500 S., Woods Cross, Utah.

The Good Old Days

Dear Joe:

The following rules were posted in 1872 to regulate daily activities of the employees of a carriage maker. They present a startling contrast between working conditions in the "Good Old Days" and those of today.

1. Office employees will daily sweep the floors, dust the furniture, shelves and showcase.
2. Each day fill the lamps, clean chimneys and trim wicks and wash the windows once a week.
3. Each clerk will bring in a bucket of water and scuttle of coal for the day's business.
4. Make your pens carefully, you may whittle nibs to your individual taste.
5. This office will open at 7 A.M. and close at 8 P.M. except on the Sabbath, on which day it will remain closed. Each employee is expected to spend the Sabbath attending church and contributing liberally to the cause of God.
6. Men employees will be given an evening off each week for courting purposes or two evenings a week if they attend church regularly.
7. After an employee has spent his 13 hours of labor in the office he shall spend the remaining time reading the Bible, or other good works.
8. Every good employee should lay aside from each pay a goodly sum of his earnings for his benefit during his declining years, so that he will not become a burden on society or his betters.
9. Any employee who smokes Spanish cigars, uses liquor in any form, or frequents pool or public halls, or gets shaved in a barber shop, will give me a good reason to suspect his worth, intentions, integrity, and honesty.
10. After an employee has performed his labors faithfully and without fault for five years he will be given an increase of 5 cents a day in his pay, providing the profits from the business permit it.—Irwin Winehouse, 99 Comstock Hill Road, Norwalk, Connecticut.

Proof of Innocence

Dear Sirs:

My grandfather, Jack Marion, started with a companion for California and Oregon about 1860. But after a hard journey to Nebraska he got discouraged and bought out his partner's claim in the team and wagon and returned home with it.

Sometime later a body was found in the Platte River. Its hands were bound with wire, suggesting the victim of a murder. Though badly decomposed the body was somehow identified as that of my grandfather's former partner and on basis of its discovery and the fact that my grandfather returned home with the horses and wagon he was arrested for murder, convicted, and sentenced to hang.

Before the sentence was carried out my grandfather broke out of jail and made his way to the Ozark country. There he met and married my grandmother, a young widow named Margaret Filbeck. Four children were born to them, including my father, who was the oldest.

The long arm of the law finally caught up with Grandfather, however. He was brought back to Nebraska and executed —I guess this must have been about 1883 as it is my understanding that my father was about ten years old at the time.

After my grandfather's execution the man he was supposed to have murdered returned from California alive. Poor means of communication and the assumption that the partner was dead had resulted in a miscarriage of justice. I wish I could give you more information about this but I cannot. I do know that there was a long and hard-fought battle in the courts after the recapture but the fact that my grandfather had broken out of prison was a major item against him.—Elbert Marion, 403 Buick, Casper, Wyoming.

Lincoln Trottingwolf

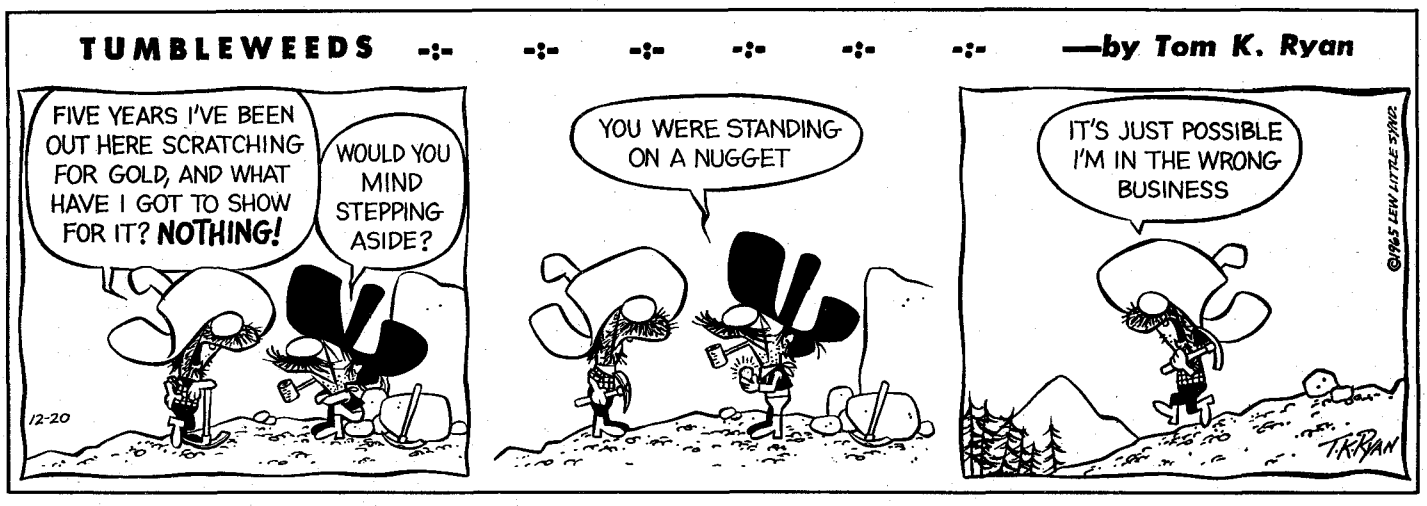
Dear Sirs:

In your February '66 TRUE WEST, there was a story of Lincoln Trottingwolf, in the Wild Old Days section. The readers of your magazine, and people who knew him, may be sad to hear of his death. The 100-year-old man, his wife and grandson lost their lives when their home burned, due it is believed to a faulty old stove. They lived in the Piney Community southeast of Jay. He was a grand old Cherokee.—A. J. Martin, 111 South Ash, Kellyville, Oklahoma.

Too Few Chiefs

Dear Sirs:

This will no doubt bring up a controversy. I read recently something about the Utes. It said the Utes have "the only real Indian chief left in the United States." It went on to say the Utes claim this proudly. The article refers to Chief Jack House. I sure would like to learn something about this.—Fred Bontems, Jr., 5080 Eliot Street, Denver, Colorado.



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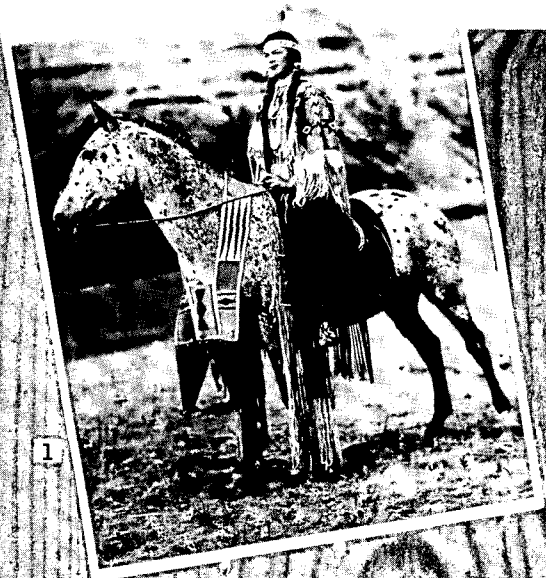
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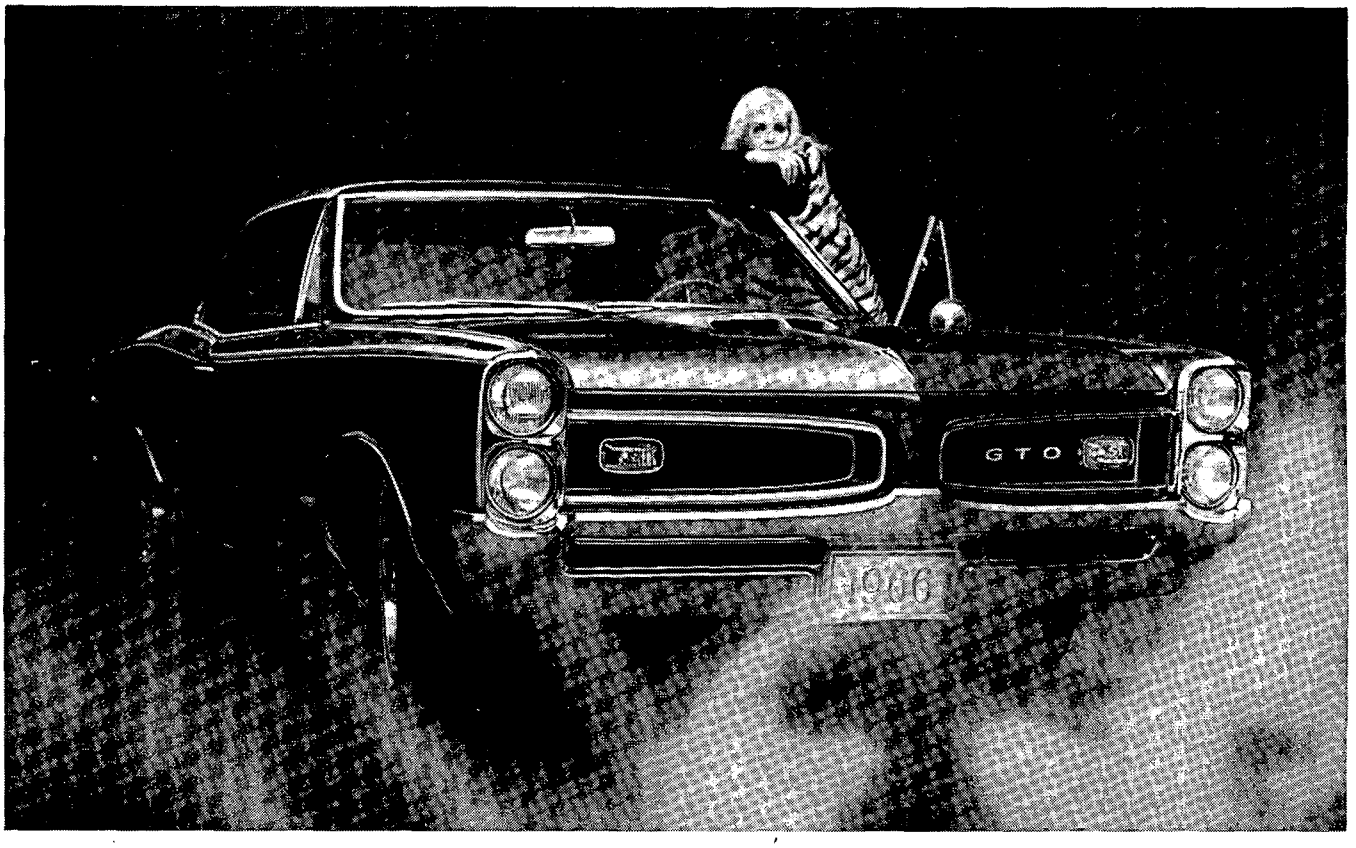

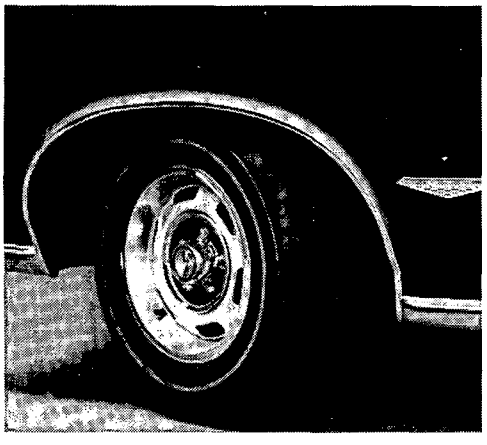

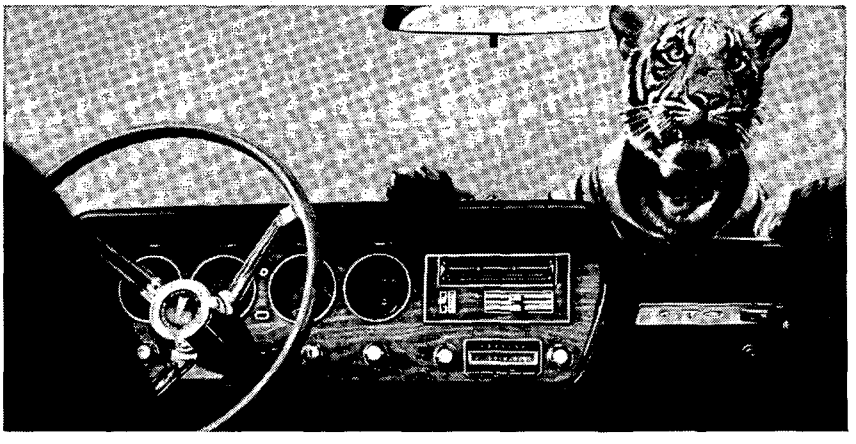

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